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Bertolt Brecht Collected Plays

Edited by
John Willett
and Ralph Manheim



RADHA KRISHNA

Introduction

THE AMERICAN PLAYS 1942-6

I

The plays in this volume are the ones which Brecht wrote during his six-year stay in the United States. He arrived on 21 July 1941, by ship from Vladivostok, after having set out from Helsinki two months earlier via Moscow and the Trans-Siberian railway. He left again by air on 31 October 1947, to return to Europe and in due course Berlin. Most of the time in between he spent living in the Los Angeles area where he had landed, though he also made prolonged visits to New York.

As in Munich nearly a quarter of a century earlier, his mentor in this new world was the now internationally successful novelist Lion Feuchtwanger, who persuaded him to remain on the West Coast where he would be close to Hollywood and its large German film colony, several of whom (like Fritz Lang and William Dieterle) were subscribing to the fund on which he and his family initially lived. Besides the three original plays which we print, therefore, and *The Duchess of Malfi* adaptation given in the appendix, his output in this period also embraced a number of rejected film outlines and synopses, including the story 'Caesar and his Legionary,' which was later taken into *Tales from the Calendar*, as well as an undetermined portion of the material for the film *Hangmen Also Die*, which Fritz Lang actually made. To this must be added the American version of *Galileo*, whose evolution is covered in volume 5, and a trickle of very fine but mostly rather short poems. His theoretical writing seems to have dried up almost entirely; major prose projects like the Caesar and 'Tui' novels went into cold storage; and he gave up writing short stories. So it is mainly on the contents of the present volume that his American experience must be judged.

To start with, its impact on his work was disastrous. This

was due above all to something that had happened on the journey: the death of his aide Margarete Steffin in Moscow from tuberculosis. Both the group of poems which he wrote 'After the death of my collaborator M.S.' (included in *Poems 1913-1956*) and his own private notes and journal entries suggest that this was among the severest blows he ever suffered; a month later he could write commenting on it:

for nearly a year i have been feeling deeply depressed as a result of the death of my comrade and collaborator steffin. up to now i have avoided thinking at all deeply about it. i'm not frightened so much of feeling pain as of being ashamed of the fact. but above all i have too few thoughts about it. i know that no pain can offset this loss, that all i can do is close my eyes to it. now and again i have even drunk a tot of whisky when her image rose before me. since i seldom do this even one tot affects me strongly. in my view such methods are just as acceptable as others that are better thought of. they are only external, but this is a problem which i don't see how to resolve internally. death is no good; all is not necessarily for the best. there is no inscrutable wisdom to be seen in this kind of thing. nothing can make up for it.

Very soon after arriving, too, he learned of the fate of another close friend, Walter Benjamin, who had killed himself on the French frontier in 1940 rather than risk being handed over to the Gestapo. At the same time, however, the atmosphere of southern California was hardly such as to relieve his depression. This was partly a matter of its utter remoteness from the war—"Tahiti in urban form" he called it soon after arriving—though Pearl Harbor that autumn brought reality closer; partly a deep-seated resentment of its artificiality and underlying commercial ethos. Thus a journal entry of March 1942 (one of many to the same effect):

extraordinary in these parts how a universally demoralizing cheap prettiness stops one from leading anything like a cultivated, i.e., dignified life.

On top of this came the often degrading experience of working for the films, which bore particularly painfully on him as he became drawn into the making of Fritz Lang's Czech resistance movie during the summer of 1942. Taking stock towards the end of April, he listed all the factors hampering him, from his loss of Steffin to his lack of money, and concluded that 'for the first time in ten years I am not doing any proper work'.

Yet even while he was battling over that film (for adequate representation of the Czech people, for his theme song, for a part for Helene Weigel and a scriptwriter's credit for himself: on all of which points he failed), his outlook in other respects was beginning to improve. Materially, he and his family no longer had to live on \$120 a month, but were able to move into a bigger and very much pleasanter house in Santa Monica (1063 26th Street; it is still there, though the area has been much built up) on the strength of the \$10,000 which Lang got for him. Once again he was working with the composer Hanns Eisler, who had arrived there in April and for whom he now wrote his 'Hollywood Elegies', condensing much of what he felt about the civilization around him. He was also in touch with a young lecturer at UCLA called Eric Bentley, who differed from the bulk of his friends in being neither central European nor involved in show-business, and who seems immediately to have helped him to widen his English reading. From Feuchtwanger he heard that the Zurich Schauspielhaus wished to stage *The Good Person of Szechwan*, while Thornton Wilder had seen and been impressed by their production of *Mother Courage*. Still more changed for him when El Alamein was followed by Stalingrad (for it should never be forgotten how closely and continuously Brecht followed the war news). And during that October he and Feuchtwanger began collaborating on the war play, a modern Saint Joan story, which was to become *The Visions of Simone Machard*.

Like the other two original plays in this book, *Simone Machard* derived from a scheme which Brecht had brought in

x Introduction

his head with him from Europe. Already perhaps inspired by the basic idea of Anna Seghers' radio play (which he was later to adapt for the Berliner Ensemble, as described in volume 9), he had conceived it in outline two years earlier, soon after the collapse of France:

a young frenchwoman in orléans, working at a filling station while her brother is away, dreams and daydreams of being joan of arc and undergoing her fate. for the germans are advancing on orléans. the voices joan hears are voices of the people—the things the blacksmith and the peasant are saying. she obeys these voices and saves france from the enemy outside, but is conquered by the enemy within. the court that sentences her is packed with pro-english clerics: victory of the fifth column.

Returning to it just before Christmas 1941, he sketched out a play in nine scenes under the title *The Voices*, whose social point should be (a) that vox dei is really vox populi, and (b) that 'owners and criminals stand shoulder to shoulder against anyone who rejects the idea of property'. Exactly at what stage he first discussed this with Feuchtwanger is not clear, but he now laid the plan aside in order to read *The Devil in France*, the book in which the novelist described his own experiences in 1940, when he had been interned outside Aix-en-Provence, then managed to escape across the Pyrenees at the point where Benjamin was turned back. Other readings about the French débâcle followed, though Feuchtwanger, who had spent all the early part of his exile in that country, remained in essential ways better informed about it than Brecht. Their systematic collaboration began at the end of October, just before the shooting of *Hangmen Also Die*, which Brecht occasionally went to watch in the afternoons. They worked mostly in Feuchtwanger's house, a quiet Spanish-style mansion on the mountains overlooking Santa Monica and the sea, which has now been made over to the University of Southern California. The curfew imposed after Pearl Harbor, together with their status as enemy aliens, prevented their meeting at night.

In one way the work went easily. The two men got on well together, and despite their disagreement as to Simone's age (for which see the notes, pp. 254 and 277) the division of responsibility seems to have given no trouble. Brecht set up the play's structure, which was then filled out in discussion between them—Feuchtwanger evidently doing his best to see that the events were probable and the details authentic—after which the actual writing of the scenes would be done by Brecht and checked over at the next meeting. 'He has a good sense of structure,' wrote Brecht approvingly,

appreciates linguistic refinements, is also capable of making poetic and dramaturgical suggestions, knows a lot about literature, pays attention to arguments and is pleasant to deal with, a good friend.

at the same time, however, he

wants to have nothing to do with the technical or social aspects (epic portrayal, a-effect, characters made up of social rather than biological ingredients, class conflicts built into the story and so on), and tolerates all that merely as my personal style . . .

Perhaps because of the effect of the previous fifteen months of largely pointless work ('that kind of thing can indeed be bad for one's handwriting,' noted Brecht of the role allotted by Hollywood to its authors) he was less able than usual to resist the pressure of convention, for aside from the dream element (itself not particularly daring by local standards) the play is quite Aristotelian in its observation of the unities. Moreover the collaborators almost certainly had Hollywood's demands in mind, both in the play and in the somewhat pot-boiling novel which Feuchtwanger subsequently wrote on the same theme (it appeared in 1944 and is briefly summarized on p. 276 ff.). Before Brecht left for New York in February 1943, leaving the ending of the play still not finally settled, an agreement was drawn up between himself, Ruth Berlau (who is neither named as a collaborator nor known to have had any

direct role in the work), and the Feuchtwangers, dividing the stage and screen rights equally and giving Feuchtwanger all rights to the proposed novel. Thereafter William Dieterle took an interest, and arranged for a rough translation into English, which had been completed by April. On the strength of this (so Feuchtwanger then wrote to Brecht) the agents Curtis Brown were hoping to persuade either Ashley Dukes or the Muirs to make a good English version. At Columbia Pictures the story editor was favourably impressed. Not so Hanns Eisler, who had watched the development of the play throughout and made occasional suggestions, and was now embarking on the music. He told Brecht in May that he disliked Simone's instinctive patriotism and saw her as the poor victim of a patriotic upbringing. Brecht had failed to show that she was being exploited.

II

His visit to New York, which lasted from February to late May 1943, launched Brecht on the writing of *Schweyk in the Second World War* as well as on the first stage of *The Duchess of Malfi* adaptation. There is a long history to Brecht's fascination with Jaroslav Hašek's Good Soldier Švejk or Schweik, arguably the outstanding fictional figure of our century; and his involvement in Erwin Piscator's dramatization of 1928 is discussed in our notes on the play. From then on he was repeatedly returning to the theme, first hoping that Piscator would film it in the USSR in the early 1930s, then expecting to be involved in the same director's scheme to film it elsewhere in 1937; 'you really mustn't do it without me', he told Piscator that spring. Though these projects came to nothing, Piscator never abandoned his interest in the Schweik saga, and by 1943 was engaged in discussions with the Theater Guild in New York with a view to a new stage production. Brecht may not have been informed about this, but the fact that *Hangmen Also Die* was a story of the Czech resistance (for Brecht and Lang were presumably unaware that Heydrich's—the hang-

man in question—assassins were for better or worse agents from Britain) almost certainly helped to turn his mind back to Hašek's anti-militarist epic, since it was during his work with Lang that he noted in his journal that

once again i would like to do *Schweyk*, interspersed with scenes from [Karl Kraus's] *The Last Days of Mankind* so people can see the ruling forces up top with the private soldier down below surviving all their vast plans.

The man who actually got him to work on this project was Ernst-Josef Aufrecht, the former Berlin impresario who had first staged *The Threepenny Opera* in 1928 and was now in New York after escaping from Unoccupied France. Partly involved in the Office of War Information German broadcasts, he was also on the lookout for a libretto to interest Kurt Weill, who had become well established on Broadway with *Lady in the Dark*. He helped to put on a mixed programme at Hunter College (in New York) on 3 April in which Weill and Lotte Lenya performed some of the Brecht songs, including 'Und was bekam des Soldaten Weib?' which Weill had recently set; this finished with a turn by the Czech clowns George Voskovec and Jan Werich entitled 'Schweik's spirit lives on'. At some point he reintroduced the two former collaborators, and proposed that they should make a Schweik musical, quickly raising the necessary \$85,000 from émigrés who remembered their previous success.

According to Brecht's journal he then spent a week staying with the Weills at New City, where he outlined a version of *The Good Person of Szechwan* which the composer thought of producing, the Zurich première having taken place on 4 February, just before Brecht came to New York. For \$500 (so Hanns Eisler later reported) he agreed to provide the Schweik libretto, of which he wrote Weill an outline in May (it is printed on pp. 279–288). Having reread Hašek's novel in the train back to Los Angeles, he quickly settled down to work on the play and had finished the first three scenes by 9 June and the whole thing by the end of the month. Though it is quite

untrue to say as Aufricht does (in his memoirs) that 'Brecht had copied whole pages of dialogue from the Schweik book' the work clearly flowed very much more easily than *Simone Machard*, without the awkward changes and compromises that mar that work. Brecht himself thought well enough of it to term it (again, in his journal)

a counterpart to *Mother Courage*. compared with the schweik which i wrote for piscator around 27 (a pure montage based on the novel) the present second world war version is a lot sharper, and corresponds to the shift from the hapsburgs' well-ensconced tyranny to the nazis' invasion.

He was more doubtful about the formal arrangement proposed, and objected to the extensive rights given to Weill. 'I'm not a librettist', he told Ruth Berlau on 26 June:

It has got to be my play, which it is (not just an American version, as with the Szechwan play), and it's not only America I have to think of. What's more, there are political considerations involved in this play; I have to have an equal voice.

However, he and Weill met again in Hollywood to discuss things. Then at the beginning of July he sent the script to Weill, assuring him that it was not especially important that (the now differently-spelt) Schweik himself should talk as he does in the German version of the novel, where he speaks a now-defunct kind of Prague German. Paul Selver's translation, he found, had managed to be comic without this, and without attempting to find Anglo-Saxon equivalents for the social and political setting. He recommended getting the American poet Alfred Kreymborg to do a version of the play, saying that he was known to Ruth Berlau and 'has the right sort of opinions (liberal)'. It is not clear whether Weill agreed, though apparently he was already nervous that the script would prove too un-American for Broadway. Brecht, however, went ahead and commissioned Kreymborg, paying him out of a loan from his friend the actor Peter Lorre, who he

hoped might play the name part. The translation was finished by 4 September, all except for the 'Moldau Song', which Brecht himself was still struggling to get right. The unavoidable effect was to infuriate Piscator, who not only regarded *Schweyk* almost as his own property—and indeed had spent much time in negotiations with the Hašek lawyer, who now gave the rights to Aufrecht—but had been expecting Kreymborg to translate the 1928 version for the Theater Guild. On 23 September each of the collaborators got a stiff letter from him, in English, warning them that he had asked his lawyers to protect his rights.

Whether or not Piscator's friendship with him was a factor, the finished play never appealed to Weill. Despite assurances that the landlady's part had been written for Lotte Lenya and that he was welcome to get in an American lyric-writer for the songs, he refused to compose a note until the production was definitely fixed, so that by September Brecht had begun discussing alternative plans with Hanns Eisler. Nor did he pursue *The Good Person of Szechwan* project further, though Brecht had by then completed the American version and still hoped that they might come to a formal agreement. Yet, though Aufrecht too had evidently rather lost heart, Brecht none the less went carefully over Kreymborg's translation when it arrived and sent it back to New York for him and Ruth Berlau to revise. This had been done by the time of Brecht's return to New York in mid-November. Shortly afterwards Weill, now in California, wrote to Brecht to summarize his objections. He could only collaborate, he said, on three conditions:

1. if the play is written by a top-class American author in the Ben Hecht category and put on by a top-class American producer.
2. if Lenya plays the publican.
3. if the play is written as a 'musical play', with more openings for music than the present version, as I do not under any circumstances wish to write incidental music.

As it stood, he thought that it

has no prospect of succeeding on the American stage without major alterations, unless there is some prominent American author (in the Ben Hecht category) who can find a way of rendering the humour of your script in American terms. Nor do I think the rights position clear enough to ensure the backing for a first-class Broadway production. But these are entirely private opinions, and I'm only telling you them because I don't want you to waste time and energy on a project which in my view hasn't much chance.

Similarly with *The Good Person of Szechwan*, where any agreement must be conditional on getting hold of an American writer. Their 'collaboration on the present version of Szechwan' was now at an end.

III

Around October, when *Schweyk* was still uppermost in his mind, Brecht went to visit Luise Rainer, who was living in Westwood not far from his 26th Street house, and without any personal acquaintance with him had signed the affidavit allowing him to come to the United States. She was then at the height of her fame after her performance in the film of *The Good Earth*, and as they were walking on the beach Brecht asked her what, of all plays, she would most like to appear in. When she named the *Chalk Circle* he instantly responded, for once again this was a theme which (as the editorial note will show) he had been taking up intermittently for several years previously; indeed he told her that he had suggested it in the first place to Klabund, whose adaptation had so successfully been performed by Elisabeth Bergner in Berlin in 1925. Miss Rainer in turn got in touch with a New York backer called Jules Leventhal, who was anxious to bring her to Broadway in a suitable work, and advised him that it would be worth commissioning Brecht and paying him a monthly salary till he had finished the play. This was formally arranged during

Brecht's second New York visit, which lasted from mid-November to the middle of March. But he does not seem to have given Leventhal much information about his plans for the play, so that when the actress returned from performing to the troops in the Mediterranean she saw Brecht in New York to find out what was happening. According to her, he reacted so disagreeably as to make her call off her participation. None the less Brecht got down to the writing very soon after his return to Santa Monica, finishing the play in something close to its final version by 5 June, when he sent it off to her (so he noted in his journal). She was then ill with the after-effects of jaundice and malaria from her Mediterranean tour, and can no longer even recollect its arrival. She was, however, aware that the play had developed an extra act since Brecht started on it, and that this was connected with his wish to give his friend Oscar Homolka a good part as Azdak, something that had not originally been bargained for.

In the meantime Brecht's financial circumstances, which nine months before had been very precarious, had changed as a result of the sale of the film rights of *Simone Machard* to MGM in February. This seems to have been due entirely to Feuchtwanger, who when Sam Goldwyn failed to understand the play got him to read the much more conventional *Simone* novel, buy the rights, and then buy those of the play as well. Brecht and Feuchtwanger had \$50,000 to divide, in return for which there could be no stage production without Goldwyn's permission for the next three and a half years. Perhaps this is one reason why Brecht seemed so little discouraged by the collapse of the original *Chalk Circle* plan (which was not yet Caucasian when his journal first mentions it in March) as to carry his preoccupation with it right through the summer of 1944. Thus he reworked the character of Grusha, whose goodness, like Simone's patriotism, had seemed too arbitrary, and tried to make her tougher; he rewrote the prologue; and he asked his neighbour Christopher Isherwood to make a translation. When Isherwood refused it was arranged that James and Tanya Stern should translate the play for Leventhal, with

lyrics by W. H. Auden, who was sharing a house with them on Fire Island. (Part of their translation appeared in spring 1946 in the *Kenyon Review*, after which the script was lost, only to turn up ten years later on one of the microfilms deposited by Ruth Berlau in the New York Public Library.) By September he seems to have more or less finished the fully revised script, which was to remain virtually unchanged for the next ten years. That month his child by Ruth Berlau, called Michel like the child in the play, was born and died in Los Angeles. Coincidentally or not, he laid the play aside and by the end of the year was deeply involved instead in the *Galileo* project with Charles Laughton, who had recently become very taken with Brecht's work.

Galileo aside—and it must be remembered that for all the effort Brecht put into it over the next two and a half years this was just a revision of a previous play—the only one of his 'American' works to reach the professional stage was *The Duchess of Malfi*, a play whose text has never formed part of the German collected works; it is printed as an appendix to the present volume. This interesting but largely frustrated adaptation was the result of Brecht's keenness to write something for the most famous of all the exiled German actresses, Elisabeth Bergner, whom he had first met in his Munich days. Soon after his arrival in the United States he had shown her the script of *The Good Person of Szechwan*, which she found boring; the trouble (so he later noted in his journal) being that she could not conceive of the theatre audience as a group of people who would change the world—

so that the basic climate of this kind of theatre is alien to her: the beginner's enthusiasm for a new millennium, the spirit of inquiry, the urge to unshackle *everybody's* productivity. in her eyes it is all a new 'style', a matter of fashion, something arbitrary.

None the less she and her producer-husband, Paul Czinner, shared the Brechts' first family Christmas in Santa Monica, entertained them in turn on New Year's Eve, and set Brecht

to work on a film story, now lost, which according to him was successfully plagiarized by some other (unidentified) writer.

One of his projects for her was an adaptation of Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, with which he apparently thought of asking Feuchtwanger to help him. Instead, however, they tackled *Simone Machard*, and by the time this was finished and Brecht had set off for New York, either he or Miss Bergner had decided that another Jacobean work would suit her better, Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. Once in New York, Brecht got in touch with the poet H. R. Hays, a friend of Hanns Eisler's who had already translated *Mother Courage* and *Lucullus* (the first two of his major plays to be published in the US) and also provided immigration affidavits. It was arranged with the Czinnars that Hays and Brecht should adapt the play together, Hays (by his own account on p. 334) doing the actual writing while Brecht concentrated on story and structure. The work began in April 1943, and by 26 June, when Brecht was back in Santa Monica finishing *Schweyk*, a first script had been completed and copyrighted in both collaborators' names. Though Brecht then showed it to Eisler and asked him to write the music nothing more seems to have been done till he returned to New York that winter, when he went back (in the words of his journal) to

work with hays and bergner on *The Duchess of Malfi*. not completely finished, since bergner is short of time.

Meanwhile he asked W. H. Auden to collaborate, seemingly without mentioning or consulting Hays. 'I have been treating Webster's text with great care,' he wrote on 5 December,

but I had to add a few new scenes and verses. These are now available in English, but it seems advisable to improve them and I have told Miss Bergner that no one could do it as well as you.

When Czinner told Hays of this proposal he walked out, leaving Auden to carry on as and when he could.

The whole project now seems to have simmered for some

eighteen months till in mid-summer of 1945 Brecht, who had come to New York a third time to help stage *The Private Life of the Master Race*, went to the Czinnners' summer place near Woodstock, Vermont, to finish it off 'in the rough'. There is no more mention of it in his journal after that point, but a final Brecht-Auden script was copyrighted in April 1946, and it was at last decided to go ahead with its production. Spurred by the production of the original play at the Haymarket Theatre in London a year earlier, with Peggy Ashcroft as the Duchess and John Gielgud as Ferdinand, the Czinnners engaged its director George Rylands, a friend of Auden's and an eminent Cambridge Elizabethan scholar, but almost ludicrously out of tune with Brecht's personality and ideas. The Duchess was of course Miss Bergner; Bosola, the black actor Canada Lee playing with a whitened face; John Carradine and Robert Speaight were also in the cast; the music was by Benjamin Britten, 'arranged' by Ignatz Strasfogel; Harry Bennett did the sets. Brecht's reactions can be gauged from the ultimatum which he sent Czinner after seeing the Boston production that September (see p. 421). His criticisms were disregarded and at the Broadway opening at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre on 15 October his contribution—which no critic could have detected once Rylands had chosen mainly to return to Webster—was no longer mentioned, credit being given to Auden alone. It is not known whether he even attended, despite his strong condemnatory note. The play got a bad press and ran only a few days.

Such was the one tangible result of Brecht's four attempts to write for Broadway. As for the others, the *Simone Machard* film was never made, first because Theresa Wright, whom MGM had cast for the part of the adolescent girl, was inappositely expecting a baby, and then because the liberation of France in 1944 made the theme so much less topical. It remained MGM's property, so Feuchtwanger told Brecht as late as 1956, when the latter wanted to propose it to Cavalcanti, director of the previous year's second-rate *Puntilla* film. Around the same time there were various inquiries about the

play—from Akimov in Leningrad, from Norman Lloyd in New York, and from Jean-Marie Serreau and Benno Besson for a mixed German–French tour—and these led Brecht to stress that

the most important thing for any production of *Simone* is that the title part must on no account be played by a young actress—not even one that looks like a child. It must be an eleven-year-old, and one that looks like a child.

This principle was followed in the eventual première of the play at Frankfurt in March 1957, which Brecht of course never saw. For there *Simone* was played by a child who had been trained specially for the part by Ruth Berlau in Berlin. Eisler, who had started writing the music in 1943, now finished it off and the whole production was a great success. None the less Eisler himself once again did not like it. ‘The play’s too heroic for me,’ he told Hans Bunge later. It was ‘a tribute to heroism. And that’s not right. I don’t need to tell you how utterly contrary to Brecht’s whole way of looking at things that is.’ Nor did the Berliner Ensemble ever stage it, though there was an East German television version that included a number of the Ensemble actors.

Schweyk remained a play, which Brecht never amended so as to provide the greater musical opportunities which Weill had asked for. None the less in the autumn of 1947, when Wolfgang Langhoff at the Deutsches Theater in (East) Berlin was planning to present it, it was to Weill that Brecht turned for the incidental music. Once again Weill put him off, and there is no further record of this plan. Eighteen months later, however, when Brecht was setting up his Ensemble, he hoped to get Peter Lorre to come to Berlin to create the part. Again, it was not possible to organize a production before Brecht’s death in 1956, though in 1955 (if we are to believe Hanns Eisler’s slightly erratic recollections) he had asked Eisler to start writing the music and to give it priority over that for *Simone Machard*. ‘Interesting that you can be so amusing,’ he told Eisler when he brought him the result a few weeks before he died.

He made me play it, and I still see him smiling at my weaknesses and his advantages.

In the event the play was first staged not in Germany at all but at the Polish army theatre in Warsaw, where Ludwik René directed it in January 1957. This was nearly fourteen years after it had been written. The *Duchess of Malfi* adaptation has never been performed again.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle was put on in America by students at Northfield, Minnesota, under the direction of Henry Goodman (now of UCLA Drama Department) who had been bitten with Brecht on seeing the *Galileo* production of July 1947. This took place in May 1948 after Brecht had left the country, and used Eric and Maja Bentley's translation, which had at some point supplanted that by the Sterns and Auden. At Brecht's suggestion the Bentleys omitted all reference to the prologue, which led to rumours alternatively that they had suppressed it as too Communist or that Brecht added it later to give a pro-Soviet flavour to an otherwise delightfully unpolitical play. Two and a half years later, when Brecht was back in Berlin, he saw the Austrian composer Gottfried von Einem in Munich and tentatively arranged for a German-language première at the Salzburg Festival, to be directed by Berthold Viertel with Homolka as Azdak and Käthe Gold as Grusha. Though their plan never materialized, he managed to interest Carl Orff in the idea of writing the music: something that Hanns Eisler found uncongenial. This was partly because there was no real certainty of a production, but above all because in his view 'Brecht was pursuing a chimera':

Brecht said he wanted a kind of music to which lengthy epics can be narrated. After all, Homer was sung. He used to say, 'Isn't it possible to write a setting or note down a cadence that would permit the delivery of a two-hour epic?'

By his own account Eisler made one or two sketches before

deciding that this was beyond him. In 1953 therefore when Brecht determined to stage the play himself with the Ensemble he went instead to Paul Dessau, who had already in America been interested enough in the 'Augsburg Chalk Circle' version of the story to draft out the framework of an oratorio. Following very much the requirements posed by Brecht in the note on p. 301, Dessau provided him with the kind of orientally-derived music which he wanted for his recycling of a popular narrative tradition still observable in North Africa and the Far East. According to the composer's *Notizen zu Noten* (Reclam, Leipzig 1947), he made use of Azerbaijani folk-tunes and rounded the play off with an extended dance which Brecht never staged. The production itself took about eight months to rehearse before its première in June 1954. Though it fell foul of the party critics in East Germany it made a great impression at the Paris International Theatre Festival the following year, since when the play has been among the best-known of Brecht's works. After 1964 it was even one of those most performed in the USSR, though according to the critic Kats (reported by Henry Glade), the prologue is simply not playable before a Soviet audience, presumably because it gives too unreal a picture of conditions there.

v

Particularly among those who disapprove of his decision to settle finally in East Germany, it has become common to contrast Brecht's six years in America with his seven years in East Berlin. And certainly the latter were not productive so far as his original writing went. But his American record is not all that impressive either, at least by the standards which he had set himself in Scandinavia and before that in pre-Nazi Berlin. Of course his initial difficulties did not last for ever, and some of the poems which he wrote from 1942 on show new qualities of concentrated observation which were a genuine gain; nor were they any the less deeply political for

being independent of day-to-day party tactics. Though he always remained in some measure dependent on the goodwill of his fellow exiles—it is difficult, for instance, to think of his involvement in *The Duchess of Malfi* as due to anything less than a wish to help on the Czinnens' part—he did gradually make his mark among the non-Germans with whom he came in contact, and here his addiction to English literature, whether classical or criminal, must surely have helped. He worked hard and systematically, witness the 'plan for the day' which he drew up on concluding *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* in Santa Monica in 1944:

get up 7 A.M. newspaper, radio. make coffee in the little copper pot. morning: work. light lunch at twelve. rest with crime story. afternoon: work or pay visits. evening meal at 7 P.M. then visitors. night: half a page of shakespeare or waley's collection of chinese poems. radio. crime story.

But three of our four plays are to a greater or lesser extent flawed, and there was only one which he chose to stage himself when he had the chance. Thus *Simone Machard* not only reflects Brecht's uncertainties while writing it (as our editorial note attempts to show), but is in essential ways inconsistent with his own attitude, just as Eisler—a judge whom he always respected—pointed out. (Of course some audiences like it all the better for that.) *Schweyk*, despite its success in capturing Hašek's tone of voice, has none of the panoramic sweep of the novel, or even of the Piscator adaptation, while there is something deeply inappropriate about pitting the amiable Good Soldier—so perfect an instrument for undermining the whiskered Emperor Franz Josef—against political psychopaths and mass murderers. Both plays, moreover, take a romanticized view of the resistance movements, whose topical appeal they were in some measure surely designed to exploit. Since *The Duchess of Malfi* was so mangled that there is difficulty in reconstructing Brecht's conception of it—something that he never seems to have wished to do himself, to judge from the absence of any German version—the only one of the

American plays to succeed in Brecht's own terms is *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, whose original translation was dug out by us and revised by the Sterns and Auden in 1959. Despite its awkward combination of two largely unrelated stories (though these had long been married up in the author's mind) and the uncharacteristic sweetness of the heroine, it is a truly epic work, embodying many of Brecht's special ideas, tastes, and talents. In many opinions it is a masterpiece.

It is significant that although this play was commissioned for a Broadway production Brecht himself could attribute its structure to 'a revulsion against the commercialized dramaturgy of Broadway'. For everything else that Brecht wrote in America, apart from his poems, was written for more or less commercial ends; and if he kicked against the commercial spirit it was surely because he knew that he was being conditioned by it. Most obviously this was so of his film stories, which were without exception what he termed 'daily bread and butter work' even though he could hardly help imbuing them with some of his own qualities (whence, no doubt, their ill success). But *Simone Machard* too was written with one eye at least to the film industry; *Schweyk* was to be a Broadway musical, while not only the other two plays but also the adaptation of *Galileo* were written with Broadway productions in view. For the first time in the fourteen years since the success of *The Threepenny Opera*, Brecht was writing exclusively for the commercial stage in its most nakedly competitive form; nor was anything that he is known to have written in America (apart possibly from a short unpublished ballet libretto for Lotte Goslar) performed by the students, musicians, or left-wing amateurs who had helped to shape some of his most original works. He was never particularly good at working for the box-office or respecting other people's conventions, while his natural cussedness made him spoil any chance he might have had of succeeding: witness his wanton (was it unconsciously deliberate?) antagonizing of Leventhal and Luise Rainer. One might almost say that it was his very failures that justify this group of plays.

Why then did he never make contact with any other form of theatre (or cinema) in the United States during those years? Perhaps it was the result of his experiences over the New York production of *Mother* in 1935 that alienated him so from the American left-wing stage; certainly he seems to have had little use for the ideas of Odets or John Howard Lawson, while even so good a friend as Gorelik was largely in disagreement with him. Nor was university theatre then anything like so active as it has since become. Perhaps too the identification of Hollywood and Broadway with the war effort was itself misleading, for Brecht was always primarily concerned to see the Nazis beaten. *Hangmen*, *Simone*, and *Schweyk* all deal with the same theme of European resistance to Hitler, while the revised prologue to *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* sets it too within the framework of the war, despite the remoteness of its legend. Oddly enough he never again took up those American themes which had fascinated him earlier, from *In the Jungle of Cities* to *Arturo Ui*, in other words from Munich days right up to his departure from Europe. As Professor James Lyon has pointed out, he did come to take a good deal of interest in the affairs of his half-adopted country and at one point considered basing a script on Edgar Lee Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*; but the only direct reflection of his surroundings is in his poems. Much must have been due to his lack of money and dependence on the German colony's esteem for him; much too to the lack of his two most-valued women collaborators, Margarete Steffin and Elisabeth Hauptmann (though the latter was then living elsewhere in the US). One can only speculate what might have happened if he had come into contact with the student movement as it later developed, or chosen to associate himself with the blacks. As it was he did not.

He already seems to have decided to return to Germany well before his summons to appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1947. 1946 is a mysteriously blank year in his life, when he wrote virtually no poems, worked on no plays other than *Galileo*, and made no entries in

his journal (unless the relevant pages have somehow been lost). But by that winter he was already planning his return, to judge from his correspondence with Piscator and Caspar Neher, to whom he reported receiving offers 'to be able to use the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm for certain purposes'. His hearing by J. Parnell Thomas's committee the following autumn was in some measure a by-product of their investigation of the motion-picture industry, though his only real link with the so-called Hollywood Ten was his friendship with Donald Ogden Stewart and his wife. What clearly was of more interest to the investigators was his association with Hanns Eisler and through him with his brother Gerhart, the one genuinely important international Communist functionary whom they were able to unearth. This was in some measure due to the Eislers' sister Ruth Fischer, who had been one of the leaders of the German Communist Party in her youth, knew Brecht, and now coined the pleasant phrase for him 'minstrel of the GPU'. Hanns was effectively deported in February 1948; Gerhart (whose prosecution was called for by Richard Nixon in his maiden speech as a Representative) left the US on a Polish liner and was lucky to escape arrest. Brecht stood up well under examination, made the committee laugh, and left for Europe under his own steam a day later. He never came back.

THE EDITORS

Contents

THE PLAYS

<i>Introduction</i>	vii
THE VISIONS OF SIMONE MACHARD	I
<i>translated by Hugh and Ellen Rank</i>	
SCHWEYK IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR	65
<i>translated by William Rowlinson</i>	
THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE	141
<i>translated by James and Tania Stern with W. H. Auden</i>	

NOTES AND VARIANTS

THE VISIONS OF SIMONE MACHARD	241
<i>Texts by Brecht</i>	241
The Visions of Simone Machard	241
Working Plan	244
The Dreams	248
First dream of Simone Machard (during the night of 14/15 June)	249
Two characters	250
<i>Editorial Note</i>	252
1. General	252
2. Scene-by-scene account	256
3. Feuchtwanger's novel	276
SCHWEYK IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR	279
<i>Texts by Brecht</i>	279
The story	279
Staging	289
<i>Editorial Note</i>	290
1. General	290
2. Scene-by-scene account	294

vi Contents

THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE	299
<i>Texts by Brecht</i>	299
Notes to <i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i>	299
Dance of the Grand Duke with his bow	303
Concerning the Prologue	304
Contradictions in <i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i>	304
Side track	306
<i>Editorial Note</i>	308
1. General	308
2. Scene-by-scene account	315
3. Prologue from the first script (1944)	324
 APPENDIX	
 THE DUCHESS OF MALFI	329
by John Webster, adapted by Bertolt Brecht and H. R. Hays, edited by A. R. Braunmuller	
<i>Introductory Note</i>	331
<i>A note on The Duchess by H. R. Hays</i>	334
<i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	337
 NOTES AND VARIANTS	417
<i>Texts by Brecht</i>	419
Brecht's version of Webster's <i>Duchess of Malfi</i>	419
How <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i> ought to be performed	420
Letter to Paul Czinner	421
Attempted Broadway production of <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	422
<i>Editorial Note</i>	424
1. General	424
2. Notes on specific scenes	428

The Visions of Simone Machard

This play was written in collaboration with LION FEUCHT-
WANGER

Translators: HUGH AND ELLEN RANK

Characters

Philippe Chavez, mayor of Saint-Martin (in the dream scenes, King Charles VII) · Henri Soupeau, *Patron* of the hostelry (the Connétable) · Marie Soupeau, his mother (Isabeau the Queen Mother) · Capitaine Honoré Fétain, a rich vineyard proprietor (the Duke of Burgundy) · The Colonel (Bishop of Beauvais) · A German *Hauptmann* (an English general)

Simone Machard (in the dream scenes, Maid of Orléans) · The drivers Maurice and Robert, Georges, Père Gustave, all employees of the hostelry · Madame Machard, Monsieur Machard, Simone's parents · A sergeant · Refugees · Minor personages (in the dream scenes, soldiers and crowd) · The angel

The scene is the courtyard of the Hostellerie 'Au Relais'. A low garage forms the background. Stage right, the back entrance to the hostelry; left, the store room with attics for the drivers. Between the garage and the store room there is a widish gateway giving on the street. The garage is capacious since the hostelry is at the same time a transport business. The action takes place in June 1940 in the little town of Saint-Martin in central France on one of the main roads from Paris to the South.

THE BOOK

The soldier Georges, his right arm bandaged, sits smoking next to old Père Gustave who is repairing a tyre. The brothers Maurice and Robert, the two chauffeurs from the hostelry, are staring at the sky. Noise of aeroplanes. It is the 14th of June, evening.

ROBERT: Those must be ours.

MAURICE: They aren't ours.

ROBERT *calling to Georges*: Georges, are those ours or German?

GEORGES *moving his bandaged arm cautiously*: The top part of my arm has gone numb too now.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Don't move it; that's bad for it.

Enter Simone Machard, a girl in her teens. Her apron is too long, her shoes too large. She is dragging a very heavy basket full of washing.

ROBERT: Heavy?

Simone nods and drags the basket to the foot of the petrol pump. The men go on smoking and watch her.

GEORGES *to Père Gustave*: D'you think it could be the bandage? It's gone stiffer since yesterday.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Simone, get Monsieur Georges some cider from the shed.

SIMONE *putting down her basket*: Suppose the Patron sees us.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Do as you're told.

Exit Simone.

ROBERT *to Georges*: Why don't you answer? Fancy wearing a uniform and not even looking up when there are planes about. If all our soldiers are like you, you bet we'll lose the war.

GEORGES: What do you say to that, Robert? The top part of my arm has gone dead too now. Père Gustave thinks it's just the bandage.

ROBERT: I asked you what planes those are overhead.

4 The Visions of Simone Machard

GEORGES *without looking up*: German. Ours stay on the ground.

Simone has returned with a bottle of cider and pours some of it out for Georges.

SIMONE: Do you think we'll lose the war, Monsieur Georges?

GEORGES: Whether we lose or win I'll be needing two arms.

Monsieur Henri Soupeau, the Patron, enters from the street. Simone quickly hides the cider. The Patron stops in the gateway; he looks to see who is in the courtyard and beckons towards the street. A gentleman in a large dustcoat enters. The Patron shows him across the yard, taking considerable trouble to screen him from the gaze of the others; the two disappear into the hostelry.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Did you see that chap in the dustcoat? He's an officer. A colonel. Another of those who have run away from the front. They don't want to be seen. Yet they eat enough for three.

Simone has gone to her basket and sat down by the petrol pump. She starts to read a book which was lying on top of the basket.

GEORGES: I'm annoyed with Robert. According to him they're bound to lose the war if all our soldiers are like me. But thanks to me they've won other things, that's for sure. Thanks to my boots for example some gentleman in Tours has made a nice profit and thanks to my helmet a gentleman in Bordeaux has done the same. My tunic brought in a château for someone on the Côte d'Azur, and my gaiters brought in seven racehorses. That way France did pretty well out of me long before the war arrived.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: But the war is being lost. By those dustcoats.

GEORGES: Yes, we've two hundred hangars with a thousand fighter planes, all paid for and fully manned, test-flown; but now that France is in peril they stay on the ground. The Maginot Line cost a hundred million and is made of steel and concrete with seven storeys below ground in open countryside. And when the battle began the Colonel got into his car and drove to the rear, followed by two lorryloads of wine and provisions. Two million men were wait-

ing for orders, ready to die, but the War Minister's mistress had fallen out with the Prime Minister's mistress, so no order came. Well, our strongpoints are immovably fixed in the ground, their strongpoints are mobile and roll right over us. Nothing can stop their tanks as long as they have fuel, and the fuel they just come and get from our pumps. Tomorrow morning they'll be here in front of your petrol station helping themselves freely. Thanks for the cider.

ROBERT: Don't talk about tanks—*with a nod towards Simone*—when she's around. Her brother is at the front.

GEORGES: She's buried in her book.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: A game of cards?

ROBERT: I've got a headache. We've been driving the Captain's wine barrels all day through streams of refugees. A mass migration.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: The Captain's wine is the most important refugee of the lot. Don't you understand that?

GEORGES: Everybody knows the man's a fascist. He must have heard from his mates on the general staff that something has gone wrong again at the front.

ROBERT: Maurice is furious. He says he's fed up with driving those bloody wine barrels through all those women and children. I'm going to have a kip. *Exit.*

PÈRE GUSTAVE: You can't run a war with streams of refugees like that. The tanks can get through any ordinary bog, but a bog of people gets them stuck. The civil population seems to be a great liability in this war. It ought to have been shifted to another planet before they started, it's nothing but a nuisance. You have to abolish people or abolish war, you can't have them both.

GEORGES *has sat down next to Simone and puts his hand into the laundry basket*: But you've taken the washing off the line dripping wet!

SIMONE *reading on*: The refugees keep pinching the tablecloths.

GEORGES: Probably for nappies or to wrap their feet in.

SIMONE: But Madame keeps check of them.

6 The Visions of Simone Machard

GEORGES *pointing to her book*: Still reading about Joan of Arc? *Simone nods*. Who gave you that book?

SIMONE: The *Patron*. But I can't get down to reading. I'm still on page 72 where Joan finishes off the English and crowns the King in Rheims. *She reads on*.

GEORGES: What are you reading that old-fashioned stuff for?

SIMONE: I want to know what happens next.—Is it true that France is the most beautiful country in the whole world, Monsieur Georges?

GEORGES: Is that what it says in the book? *Simone nods*. I don't know the whole world. But they say the most beautiful country is the country you live in.

SIMONE: What's the Gironde like, for instance?

GEORGES: I believe that's another place where they grow wine. France is the great wine-drinker, so they say.

SIMONE: Are there a lot of barges on the Seine?

GEORGES: About a thousand.

SIMONE: And Saint-Denis, where you used to work: what's it like there?

GEORGES: Nothing to shout about.

SIMONE: Apart from that it's the most beautiful country.

GEORGES: It's a good country for bread, wine and fish. There's nothing wrong with the cafés with their orange awnings or the huge meat and fruit markets, especially in the morning. The bistros where you sit over a glass of Framboise aren't so bad either. The fairs and ship launchings with brass bands, we could keep them too. Who could have anything against the poplars people play boules under? Do you have to go down to the village hall again today with those food packets?

SIMONE: I wish the sappers would arrive before I have to go.

GEORGES: What sappers?

SIMONE: They're expecting some sappers in the kitchen. Their field kitchen got lost among those streams of refugees, and they're from 132 Regiment.

GEORGES: That's your brother's lot, isn't it?

SIMONE: Yes. They're moving up to the front.—This book

says the Angel told the Maid to kill all France's enemies, it was God's will.

GEORGES: You'll have nightmares again if you read that gory stuff. What do you think I took the newspapers away from you for?

SIMONE: Do their tanks really go right through the crowds, Monsieur Georges?

GEORGES: Yes. And you've read enough.

He tries to take her book away. The Patron appears at the door of the inn.

PATRON: Georges, you're not to let anyone into the breakfast room. *To Simone*: And you're reading again during working hours, Simone. That's not what I gave you the book for.

SIMONE *has busily begun to count the tablecloths*: I only glanced at it while I was counting the linen. Sorry, Monsieur Henri.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: If I were you I wouldn't have given her that book, Monsieur Henri. It makes her quite confused.

PATRON: Nonsense. In times like these it won't hurt her to learn something about French history. Our young people don't know what France means any longer. *Speaks over his shoulder into the house*: Jean, the hors-d'œuvres into the breakfast room. *Turns to those in the yard*: You read and see what sort of a spirit there was then! God knows we could do with another Maid.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *with a hypocritical air*: Where could we find one?

PATRON: Where could we find one? Anywhere! It could be anyone. You. Georges. *Pointing to Simone*: It could be her. A child could tell you what's needed, it's obvious. Even she could tell our country.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: A bit small for a Joan of Arc perhaps.

PATRON: A bit small, a bit young, a bit tall, a bit old! There's always a good excuse when the spirit is lacking. *Over his shoulder, back into the house*: Did you take some of the Portuguese sardines, Jean?

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Well, what about it? Do you feel like a change? Only I'm afraid angels don't appear these days.

8 The Visions of Simone Machard

PATRON: That's enough, Père Gustave. I would be obliged if you suppressed your cynicism in the presence of this child. Let her read her book without your dirty comments.

Going in: But it needn't be in working hours, Simone.

Exit.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *grinning*: How about that, Georges? Now even the scullery maid is to be re-educated to become the Maid of Orléans, just in her spare time of course. They are stuffing the children with patriotism. They themselves are hiding in their dustcoats; or hoarding their petrol in some brickworks we know of instead of handing it over to the army.

SIMONE: The *Patron* wouldn't do anything wrong.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: No, he's the great benefactor. He pays you twenty francs a week so that your people should 'have at least that much'.

SIMONE: He's keeping me on so my brother doesn't lose his job here.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: In that way he gets a petrol pump attendant, a waitress and a scullery maid, all rolled into one.

SIMONE: That's because there's a war on.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: And that's not at all bad for him, is it?

PATRON *appears in the doorway of the hostelry*: Père Gustave, half a bottle of Chablis '23 for the gentleman who's having trout. *Returns into the hostelry.*

PÈRE GUSTAVE: The gentleman in the dustcoat, alias the Colonel, desires a bottle of Chablis before France falls. *Exit into the store room. During the following scene he brings the bottle of Chablis across the yard into the hostelry.*

A FEMALE VOICE *from the first floor of the hostelry*: Simone, where are the tablecloths?

Simone takes up the basket and is about to enter the hostelry.

Enter from the street a sergeant and two sappers with a dixie.

SERGEANT: We're supposed to pick up our food here. The Mayor's office say they've rung up.

SIMONE *keen, radiantly*: I'm sure it'll be ready. Just go into the kitchen. *To the sergeant, while the two sappers go in*: My brother

André's with 132 Regiment too, Monsieur. Do you happen to know why there has been no more mail from him?

SERGEANT: Everything is upside down at the front. We haven't been in touch with our people at the front for the last two days either.

SIMONE: Have we lost the war, Monsieur?

SERGEANT: Oh no, Mademoiselle. It's just a question of isolated thrusts by enemy tank formations. They think the monsters will soon run out of petrol. Then they'll just break down along the roads, you know.

SIMONE: I've heard they won't get as far as the Loire.

SERGEANT: No, no. Don't you worry. It's a long way from the Seine to the Loire. The only bad thing is those streams of refugees. You can hardly move because of them. And we have to repair the bombed bridges, otherwise our reserves can't get through.

The two sappers return with their dixie, the sergeant looks into it.

SERGEANT: Is that all? It's a disgrace. Look at this dixie, Mademoiselle. Not even half full. This is the third restaurant they've sent us to. Nothing at all in the first two, and now this.

SIMONE *looks into the dixie, shocked*: That must be a mistake. We've got enough. Lentils, bacon too. I'll go and see the *Patron* myself straight away. You'll get a full dixie. Wait a moment. *She runs in.*

GEORGES *offering cigarettes*: Her brother can't be more than seventeen. He was the only volunteer in Saint-Martin. She's very fond of him.

SERGEANT: The devil take it, I don't call this a war. They're treating the army like an enemy in its own country. And the Prime Minister saying on the radio 'The Army is the People'.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *who has come out again*: 'The Army is the People.' And the people are the enemy.

SERGEANT *hostile*: How do you mean?

GEORGES *looking into the cauldron*: How can you stand for that? Fetch the Mayor.

SERGEANT: We know Mayors. They do nothing.

SIMONE *returns slowly, without looking at the Sergeant*: The Patron says that's all the hostelry can spare; there are so many refugees.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: And we can't spare anything for them because the army gets it all.

SIMONE *desperately*: The Patron is furious because the Mayor's office is making such demands.

SERGEANT *tired*: Always the same story.

PATRON *in the doorway, handing a folded bill to Simone*: Give the gentleman who had trout his bill. Tell him I'm charging the strawberries at what they cost me, it was your parents that sold them to the hostelry. *He pushes her in*. What's the matter? Are the gentlemen not satisfied? Perhaps you'll be good enough to put yourselves in the shoes of the civil population. They have already been bled white, and new demands are being put on them all the time. God knows nobody feels for France as I do, but—*with a great gesture of helplessness*—I can only keep this place up by making the greatest sacrifices. Look at the help I've got. *Points to Père Gustave and Georges*. An old man and a cripple. And this youngster of a girl. I give them work because otherwise they would starve. But I can't feed the French army as well.

SERGEANT: And I can't ask my men to march into the night under fire for you on an empty stomach. Mend the bridges yourselves. I'll wait for my field kitchen. Even if it means waiting seven years. *Exit with sappers*.

PATRON: What can I do? You can't please everybody. *Trying to ingratiate himself*: Well, boys, you should be glad you don't own a hostelry. It's like having to defend it against wolves, eh? After all the trouble we took to get it two stars in the guide book. *With annoyance, as Père Gustave and Georges show little sympathy for his troubles*: Don't stand around like cabbages! *Calling back into the house*: Monsieur, the yard is clear now.

COLONEL, *the gentleman in the dustcoat, comes out of the hostelry; to the Patron who sees him across the yard as far as the street*:

Your prices are impudent, Monsieur. 160 francs for a lunch!

GEORGES *has meanwhile gone into the hostelry and pulls out Simone, who holds her hands to her face*: They left quite a while ago. You don't have to hide in the passage because of them. It's not your fault, Simone.

SIMONE *drying her tears*: It's just that they're from the 132nd too, you know. Their people at the front are waiting for help, and the sappers have to repair the bridges first, Monsieur Georges.

PATRON *returning from the street*: Foie gras, trout, saddle of lamb, asparagus, Chablis, coffee, a Martell '84. In these days! And when the bill comes they pull a face that long. But they have to be served at the double because they can't wait to get away from the battle. An officer! A colonel! Poor France. *Observing Simone, and with a bad conscience*: And you, don't you interfere in kitchen matters. *Exit into the hostelry*.

GEORGES *to Père Gustave, pointing to Simone*: She's ashamed because of the sappers.

SIMONE: What are they going to think of the hostelry, Monsieur Georges?

GEORGES *to Simone*: It's not you who ought to be ashamed. The hostelry cheats like hell, the *Patron* would take the pennies off a dead man's eyes. You aren't the hostelry, Simone. When they praise the wine you have no reason to smile and when the roof falls in you have no reason to cry. It wasn't you chose the linen. It wasn't you held back the food. Get me?

SIMONE *unconvinced*: Yes, Monsieur Georges.

GEORGES: André's fully aware you are keeping his job here warm for him. That's enough. Now you go off to the village hall and see young Francois. But don't let his mother scare you again with her talk of Stukas, or you'll dream half the night that you're in the middle of the fighting. *He pushes her into the hostelry*. *To Père Gustave*: Too much imagination.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *mending his tyre*: She doesn't like going down

12 The Visions of Simone Machard

to the hall. They abuse her because the food packets are too expensive.

GEORGES *with a sigh*: She will even stick up for the Patron, if I know. She's loyal, our Simone.

PATRON *comes out of the hostelry and calls in the direction of the store room, clapping his hands*: Maurice! Robert!

ROBERT'S VOICE *from the shed, sleepily*: Yes?

PATRON: Captain Fétain rang up. He wants you to go on to Bordeaux with the rest of his wine barrels.

ROBERT'S VOICE: Tonight? But that's impossible, Monsieur Henri. We've been two days on the road.

PATRON: I know, I know. What can I do? The Captain thinks we're taking too long about it. What do you expect, with those blocked roads? I really don't want to do you out of your sleep, but . . . *Gesture of helplessness.*

ROBERT'S VOICE: But the roads are blocked by night too, and on top of that you can't use your headlights.

PATRON: That's war for you. But we can't antagonize our best customers. Maman insists on it. So get ready. *To Père Gustave*: Oh, do finish your tyre.

Monsieur Chavez, the Mayor, has entered from the street, a brief-case under his arm. He is very agitated.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *drawing the Patron's attention to him*: The Mayor.

MAYOR: Henri, I've got to speak to you once more about your lorries. I must insist that you put them at my disposal for the refugees.

PATRON: But I've told you that I'm bound by contract to move Captain Fétain's wine. I can't say no to him. Maman and the Captain have been friends from their young days.

MAYOR: Captain Fétain's wine! Henri, you know how I hate to interfere in your business affairs, but under present conditions I can no longer make allowances for your relations with that fascist Fétain.

Simone has come out of the hostelry with a tray full of big packets suspended from her neck and carrying two baskets filled with more packets.

PATRON *menacingly*: Philippe, better not call Captain Fétain a fascist.

MAYOR *bitterly*: 'Better not.' That's all you've got to say, you and your Captain, when the Germans are up to the Loire. France is going to the dogs.

PATRON: Where? Where are the Germans?

MAYOR *emphatically*: Up to the Loire. And our Ninth Army, which was standing by to relieve the situation, has found Route 20 blocked with refugees. Your lorries are requisitioned like all the other lorries in Saint-Martin, and will be ready tomorrow morning to evacuate the refugees in the hall. That's official. *He takes a small red notice from his briefcase and is about to stick it to the garage door.*

SIMONE *quietly, horrified, to Georges*: The tanks are coming, Monsieur Georges!

GEORGES *putting his arm round her shoulder*: Yes, Simone.

SIMONE: They're up to the Loire; they'll be coming into Tours.

GEORGES: Yes, Simone.

SIMONE: And they will be coming here, won't they?

PATRON: Now I understand why the Captain was in such a hurry.

Shaken: The Germans up to the Loire, that's terrible. *Crosses over to the Mayor, who is still busy fixing his notice.* Philippe, leave that. Let's go in. We must talk in private.

MAYOR *angrily*: No, Henri, we are not going to talk in private any more. Your people are to know that your lorries have been requisitioned, and your petrol too. I've winked an eye for too long.

PATRON: Have you gone mad? Requisitioning my lorries at this juncture! And I have no petrol except that little bit here.

MAYOR: Plus some black market stuff you haven't registered.

PATRON: What? You dare suspect me of hoarding petrol illegally? Père Gustave, have we any black market petrol? *Père Gustave pretends not to have heard, and is about to roll his tyre into the garage.*

14 The Visions of Simone Machard

PATRON *shouting*: Maurice! Robert! Come down at once! Père Gustave! *Père Gustave stops*. Out with it! Have we any black market petrol or not?

PÈRE GUSTAVE: I don't know anything about it. *To Simone, who is staring at him*: You get on with your work and stop eavesdropping.

PATRON: Maurice! Robert! Where are you?

MAYOR: If you have no extra petrol how are you going to move Captain Fétain's wine?

PATRON: A catch question, eh, Mayor? Well, I'll tell you: I'm going to move the Captain's wine with the Captain's petrol. Georges, have you heard of my having any black market petrol?

GEORGES *looking at his arm*: I've only been back from the front four days.

PATRON: All right, that lets you out, but here are Maurice and Robert. *Maurice and Robert have come*. Maurice and Robert! Here's Monsieur Chavez accusing the hostelry of hiding petrol. I ask you in Monsieur Chavez's presence: is that true? *The brothers hesitate*.

MAYOR: Maurice and Robert, you know me. I'm no policeman. I don't like interfering in other people's business. But France needs petrol now, and I am asking you formally to state that there is petrol here. You are honest chaps.

PATRON: Well?

MAURICE *gloomily*: We don't know about any petrol.

MAYOR: So that's your answer. *To Simone*: You've got a brother at the front. But I suppose you won't tell me there is petrol here either.

Simone stands motionless, then she begins to cry.

PATRON: Ah, you want to call this young girl as a witness against me? You have no right, Mayor, to undermine this child's respect for her *Patron*. *To Simone*: You can go.

MAYOR *tired*: Are you sending her to the hall again with those exorbitant packets of yours? You gave the sappers a half-empty dixie. Everybody's exploiting the refugees down to their last sou, that's why they can't move on.

PATRON: I am an innkeeper, not a charitable institution.

MAYOR: All right. Only a miracle can save France now. She's rotten to the core. *Exit. Silence.*

PATRON: Beat it, Simone. Allez hopp!

Simone walks slowly and uncertainly to the gateway of the yard, repeatedly looking round. The book which she has hidden on her tray drops to the ground. She shyly picks it up and walks out of the yard with her packets and baskets.

First Dream of Simone Machard

Night of 14-15 June

Music. Out of the darkness the angel emerges. He stands on the garage roof, his face golden and expressionless. In his hand he has a small drum, and he calls out 'Joan!' three times in a loud voice. Then the stage gets lighter, and Simone is standing in the empty courtyard looking up at the angel, with the linen basket on her arm.

THE ANGEL

Joan, thou daughter of France, something must be done
Or mighty France will bleed to death before two weeks
have run.

That's why God Almighty has begun looking around for
aid

And now His eyes have fallen on His little Maid.

I bring you a drum, which God's sent specially
For you to shake the people awake from their everyday
lethargy.

To beat it so that it echoes you must lay it on the ground
As if you would make the very soil of France resound
Till rich and poor, old and young, all waking from their
trance

Take pity on their mother, la France.

16 The Visions of Simone Machard

If she needs shipping, summon every bargeman on the
Seine.

Make the peasants of Gironde feed her fighting men.

When she wants tanks you must wake the metal workers in
the town of Saint-Denis.

Let the carpenters of Lyon saw away the bridges to hamper
the enemy.

Speak to them. Tell them that the mother by whom they've
been protected

And whom in return they have insulted and rejected—

Tell them that France, the mighty worker and drinker of
wine

Needs them to rescue her. Let your drumming be their sign!

SIMONE *looking round to see if anyone else is there*: Do I have to,
Monsieur? Aren't I too small for a Saint Joan?

THE ANGEL: No.

SIMONE: Then I'll do it.

THE ANGEL: It will be hard. Leftit cribble clump.

SIMONE *timidly*: Are you my brother André?

The angel is silent.

SIMONE: Are you all right?

*The angel disappears. But Georges comes sauntering out of the
darkened garage, bringing Simone his bayonet and his steel helmet.*

GEORGES: A sword and a helmet, that's what you'll need.

It's not the sort of thing for you, but the *Patron* has nobody
else to help him apart from a cripple and a young girl. For-
get about your work. Listen, the tanks are going ahead like
bulldozers, flattening everything. No wonder your brother
is now an angel.

SIMONE *taking the helmet and bayonet*: Shall I clean them for
you, Monsieur Georges?

GEORGES: No, as you're the Maid of Orleans you'll need
them.

SIMONE *putting on the helmet*: How right you are. I must go
straightaway and see the King at Orleans. It's a good
twenty miles, the tanks do about 45 m.p.h., and my shoes
are full of holes, I shan't have a new pair till Easter. *Turns as*

if to go. At least wave me good-bye, Monsieur Georges, or else I'll be too scared to go; battles are old-fashioned, bloody stuff.

Georges makes an effort at waving with his bandaged arm, then disappears. Simone sets out on her way to Orleans, marching around in a small circle.

SIMONE *sings loudly*:

As I went to Saint-Nazaire

I forgot my trousers.

All at once I heard a cry:

Where've you put your trousers?

I replied: at Saint-Nazaire

Skies are blue as ever

And the wheat's as tall as I

And the sky blue as ever.

The drivers Maurice and Robert suddenly appear jogging along after her, bearing medieval weapons but in their overalls.

SIMONE: What are you doing here? Why are you following me?

ROBERT: We're following you because we are your body-guard. But would you mind not singing that song, it's indecent. After all, we are engaged to you, Joan, so you'd better behave yourself.

SIMONE: Am I engaged to Maurice too?

MAURICE: Yes, secretly.

Père Gustave comes towards them dressed in very simple medieval armour. He looks away and tries to pass them.

SIMONE: Père Gustave!

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Count me out. Fancy putting me in the heavy artillery at my age. What a nerve! Live off tips and die for France!

SIMONE *quietly*: But your mother, France, is in *danger*.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: My mother was Madame Poirot the washer-woman. She was going to get pneumonia. But what could I do? I couldn't afford all the dozens of medicines she needed.

SIMONE *shouting*: Then I command you in the name of God

and the Angel to turn back and command the heavy artillery against the enemy. *More softly*: I'll clean it for you.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: All right, that's different. Here you are, take my pike. *He adds his pike to her load and joins them in their march.*

MAURICE: How much longer, Simone? We're doing this for the bloated capitalists. Workers of unfurled, ignite! *Simone replies likewise in dream language and is incomprehensible to the audience. She speaks with great conviction.*

MAURICE *who understands her*: That's quite true. Good, let's march on.

ROBERT: You're stumbling, Simone. This load is too heavy for you.

SIMONE *suddenly quite exhausted*: Sorry. But I didn't have a proper breakfast. *Stops and wipes her brow.* I'll be all right in a minute. Robert, can you remember what I'm to tell the King?

ROBERT *says something in the incomprehensible dream language, then*: That's all.

SIMONE: Many thanks. Of course. Look, over there—the towers of Orleans.

The Colonel arrives wearing armour under his dustcoat. He slinks across the yard and out.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: That's a fine start. The brasshats are clearing off; they're on the run.

SIMONE: Why are the streets so empty, Père Gustave?

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Probably all at supper.

SIMONE: And why hasn't anyone rung the alarm bells now the enemy's on the doorstep, Père Gustave?

PÈRE GUSTAVE: They were probably sent to Bordeaux on Captain Fétain's orders.

The Patron stands at the entrance of the hostelry wearing a helmet with red plumes and an improvised shining breastplate.

PATRON: Joan, take these exorbitant packets down to the hall straightaway.

SIMONE: But Monsieur Henri, our beloved mother France is in danger. The Germans are up to the Loire and I must talk to the King.

PATRON: Are you mad? I'm doing all I can. Don't forget I'm the *Patron*. Your duty is to me.

A man dressed in crimson emerges from the garage.

SIMONE *proudly*: Look, Monsieur Henri, here comes King Charles VII!

The man in crimson is actually the Mayor, who is wearing the royal robe over his suit.

MAYOR: Hullo, Joan.

SIMONE *astonished*: Are you really the King?

MAYOR: Yes, that's official, I'm confiscating the lorries. We must talk in private, Joan.

The drivers, Père Gustave and the Patron disappear into the darkness. Simone and the Mayor sit down at the foot of the petrol pump.

MAYOR: Joan, all is lost. The General's gone off without leaving an address. I've written to the Connétable to ask for artillery, but the letter with my royal seal was returned unopened. My Master of Horse says he's been wounded in the arm, but if that's so nobody has seen it. Everything is rotten to the core. *Weeping*: I suppose you have come to tax me with being weak. Well, so I am. But what about you, Joan? First of all, tell me where the black market petrol is kept.

SIMONE: In the brickworks of course.

MAYOR: I knew it, I winked an eye; but you're robbing the refugees down to their last sou with your exorbitant packets.

SIMONE: It's because I have to keep an angel's job warm for him, King Charles.

MAYOR: And it's to keep their job that the drivers transport Captain Fétain's wine rather than refugees?

SIMONE: Also because the *Patron* says they're on essential work, so they aren't called up.

MAYOR: O dear, the innkeepers and the nobility, that's who I have to thank for my grey hairs. The nobility is against the King. It says that in your book. But you have the people behind you, particularly Maurice. Shall we make a pact, Joan, you and me?

SIMONE: Why not, King Charles? *Hesitantly*: But you'd have

to interfere quite drastically in business matters if the dixies are to be kept full.

MAYOR: I'll see what I can do. However, I must tread carefully, or they'll cut off my royal income, I'm the man who always winks an eye, and so of course nobody does what I say. I'm expected to do all the dirty work. Take the sappers, for instance. Instead of simply taking their food from the hostelry by force, they come to me and say 'Mend the bridges yourselves. *We'll* wait for our field kitchen.' It's not surprising then if the Duke of Burgundy goes over to the English.

PATRON *in the doorway*: I understand your Majesty is not satisfied. Perhaps you'll be good enough to put yourself in the shoes of your civil population. They've already been bled white. Nobody feels for France more than I do, but . . . *Gesture of helplessness. Exit.*

MAYOR *resignedly*: How can we beat the English like that?

SIMONE: The time has come for me to sound my drum. *She sits down on the ground and beats her invisible drum. Every beat resounds as if it were emanating from the bowels of the earth.* Arise, bargemen of the Seine! Follow me, metal workers of Saint-Denis! You carpenters of Lyons, wake up! The enemy is coming!

MAYOR: What are you looking at, Joan?

SIMONE: They are coming! Don't flinch! At their head is the drummer with a voice like a wolf and a drum stretched with a Jew's skin; clinging to his shouldees, a vulture with the look of the banker Fauche from Lyons. Just behind him comes Field-Marshal Fireraiser. He is on foot, a fat clown wearing seven uniforms not one of which makes him look human. Swinging above the heads of these two fiends is a canopy of newspapers, making him easily recognizable. Behind them ride the hangmen and the generals. Each one has a swastika branded on his low forehead, and following them as far as the eye can see come the tanks and guns and railway trains, also lorries with altars on and torture chambers, for everything is on wheels and highly mobile. Ahead

go the battle waggons and behind come the loot waggons. The people are mown down, but the harvest is brought in. So wherever they arrive cities collapse, and wherever they have been a barren waste remains. But now there will be an end of them, for here stands King Charles and the Maid of God, that's me.

All the French characters who have already appeared in the play and others yet to appear group together on the stage, carrying medieval weapons and wearing improvised armour.

SIMONE *radiantly*: You see, King Charles, they're all here.

MAYOR: Not all, Joan. I don't see my mother Isabeau, for example, and the Connétable went away in anger.

SIMONE: Don't be afraid. I must crown you King so that we have unity among the French. I remembered to bring your crown. Here it is. *She takes a crown from her linen basket.*

MAYOR: Who am I going to play cards with if the Connétable doesn't come back?

SIMONE: Okkal grisht burlap.

Simone places the crown on the Mayor's head. In the background appear the sappers beating their dixie with a ladle. Great ringing of bells.

MAYOR: Why are the bells ringing?

SIMONE: Those are the bells of Rheims cathedral.

MAYOR: Aren't they the sappers I sent to the hostelry to collect their food?

SIMONE: They didn't get any. That's why their dixies are empty. Those empty dixies are your coronation bells, King Charles.

MAYOR: Clether dunk freer! Clicketick!

ALL: Long live the King and the Maid who crowned him!

MAYOR *to Simone*: Thank you very much, Joan, you have saved France.

The stage darkens. The voice of a radio announcer mingles with a cacophony of music.

THE HANDSHAKE

Early morning. The drivers Maurice and Robert, Père Gustave and the soldier Georges are sitting at breakfast. Sound of the wireless from the hostelry.

RADIO: We are repeating a bulletin released by the Ministry of War at 3.30 a.m. Owing to the unexpected crossing of the Loire by German tank formations, fresh streams of refugees have been pouring along strategically vital roads in central France tonight. The population is urgently requested to stay put so that the roads can be kept open for our relief forces.

MAURICE: It's time to scam.

GEORGES: The head waiter and the others have gone; they spent the whole night packing the china, then they pissed off. The *Patron* threatened them with the police, but it made no difference.

ROBERT to Georges: Why didn't you wake *us* right away?
Georges does not reply.

MAURICE: The *Patron* didn't let you, eh? *He laughs.*

ROBERT: Aren't you clearing off too, Georges?

GEORGES: No. I'll get rid of my uniform and stay put. At least I get something to eat here. I've given up hoping my arm will ever be all right.

The Patron comes out of the hostelry. He is smartly dressed and appears to be very busy. Simone shuffles after him, carrying his suitcases.

PATRON *clapping his hands*: Maurice, Robert, Gustave, come along, come along. Get this china on to the lorries. Everything in the store room goes too. Pack the hams in salt. But first load up my best wines. You can drink your coffee later, there's a war on. We're going to Bordeaux.

They ignore him and continue with their breakfast. Maurice laughs.

PATRON: What's the matter? Didn't you hear me? The things must be packed and put on the lorries.

MAURICE *off-handedly*: The lorries have been requisitioned.

PATRON: Requisitioned? Rubbish. *With a great gesture*: That was yesterday. The German tanks are rumbling towards Saint-Martin. That changes everything. What applied yesterday doesn't apply today.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *murmurs*: Too true.

PATRON: Take that cup away from your mouth when I'm talking to you.

Simone has put down the suitcases and during this exchange has quietly returned to the hostelry.

MAURICE: Another coffee, Robert.

ROBERT: Right you are; you never know where the next one's coming from.

PATRON *trying to suppress his anger*: Have some sense. Help your *Patron* to pack up. I'll see you right. *As none of them looks up*: Père Gustave, go and get started on the china. Get a move on.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *gets up hesitantly*: I'm still eating my breakfast. Don't look at me like that. That won't work any more.

Angrily: You can stuff your bloody china, today. *Sits down*.

PATRON: Have you gone crazy too? At your age? *He looks from one to the other, then notices the motorbike; bitterly*: Oh, I see, so you're waiting for the Germans? Your *Patron's* finished? So that's the love and respect you owe to your provider. *To the drivers*: Three times I declared you indispensable; otherwise you'd be at the front now. And that's the thanks I get. That's what comes of thinking we're all one little family. *Over his shoulder*: Simone, a cognac! I feel quite weak. *As there is no answer*: Simone, where the devil are you?—Now she's gone too.

Simone comes out of the hostelry wearing a jacket over her dress. She tries to leave without being seen by the Patron.

PATRON: Simone!

Simone continues on her way.

PATRON: Have you gone mad? Answer me.

24 The Visions of Simone Machard

Simone starts running; exit. Patron shrugs his shoulders and taps his forehead.

GEORGES: What's the matter with Simone?

PATRON *turning to the drivers again*: So you're refusing to work for me, eh?

MAURICE: Not a bit. When we've done eating, we're off.

PATRON: And the china?

MAURICE: We'll take it. If you load it up.

PATRON: Me?

MAURICE: Yes, you. It's yours, isn't it?

ROBERT: But we can't guarantee we'll get to Bordeaux, Maurice.

MAURICE: Who can guarantee anything today?

PATRON: That's monstrous! Do you know what will happen to you if you disobey orders here in the face of the enemy? I'll have you put up against a wall and shot.

Simone's parents enter from the street.

PATRON: What do *you* want?

MADAME MACHARD: We've come because of our Simone. They say the Germans will be here soon and you are leaving. Simone is only a young girl, and Monsieur Machard is worried about the twenty francs a week.

PATRON: She's run away, God knows where.

GEORGES: Hasn't she come home, Madame Machard?

MADAME MACHARD: No, Monsieur Georges.

GEORGES: That's strange.

The Mayor comes in with two policemen. Simone is hiding behind them.

PATRON: Just in time, Philippe. *With a great gesture*: Philippe, I've got a mutiny on my hands. Do something.

MAYOR: Henri, Mademoiselle Machard tells me you are planning to make off with the lorries. I shall prevent this unlawful act with all the means at my disposal. That includes the police. *Points to the policemen.*

PATRON: Simone, have you had the impertinence...? Gentlemen, in the kindness of my heart I gave this creature a job for her parents' sake.

MADAME MACHARD *shaking Simone*: What have you done now?

Simone remains silent.

MAURICE: I sent her.

PATRON: I see. And you obeyed *Maurice*?

MADAME MACHARD: Simone, how could you?

SIMONE: I wanted to help Monsieur le Maire, Maman. They need our lorries.

PATRON: *Our* lorries!

SIMONE *becoming confused*: The roads are blocked for André, you see. *Unable to go on*: Please, Monsieur le Maire, you explain.

MAYOR: Henri, do try to be a bit less selfish. The child was right to call me. In times like these whatever we have belongs to France. My sons are at the front, so is her brother. Not even our sons belong to us any more.

PATRON *outraged*: So there's no more law and order? So private property has ceased to exist, has it? Why don't you hand over my hostelry to the Machards? Perhaps these gentlemen, my drivers, would like to empty my safe? This is what I call anarchy! May I remind you, Monsieur Chavez, that my mother went to school with the Préfet's wife? And there's still a telephone.

MAYOR *more weakly*: Henri. I'm only doing my duty.

PATRON: Philippe, be logical. You talk about what belongs to France. Don't my provisions, my valuable china, my silver belong to France? Would you like to see them fall into the hands of the Germans? Not a coffee cup, not a tin of sardines, not a single sausage must fall into enemy hands. They must find a desert, I hope you remember that. You as mayor should come to me and say: Henri, it's your duty to get all your possessions to safety. To which I'd have to reply: Philippe, to do that I need my lorries.

Agitated voices of a crowd from the street. The bell of the hotel is being rung and a door being hammered.

PATRON: What's that? Georges, go and see what's happening
Georges goes into the hostelry. And as for my employees, who

have so far forgotten themselves as to abandon my possessions, you should say—to *the drivers*: Gentlemen, I am appealing to you as Frenchmen to pack the china.

GEORGES *coming back*: A crowd of people from the village hall, Monsieur Henri. They've heard a rumour that the lorries are to be taken away. They're very upset and want to speak to the Mayor.

PATRON *growing pale*: There you are, Philippe. I have Simone to thank for that. Quick, Georges, close the gate. *Georges goes to do so*. Quick, quick, hurry up!—That's the effect of that vicious propaganda against my packets. The mob. *To the policemen*: Do something! Quickly! You must phone for reinforcements, Philippe, you owe me that. They'll do things to me, Philippe. Help me! Please, Philippe.

MAYOR *to his policemen*: Guard the gate. *To the Patron*: Nonsense, nothing's going to happen to you. You heard what he said, they just want to speak to me. *Responding to a fresh hammering at the yard gate*: Let a deputation in. No more than three.

The policemen open the gate slightly and negotiate with the crowd. Then they admit three people, two men and a mother with a child in arms.

MAYOR: What is it?

ONE OF THE REFUGEES *excitedly*: Monsieur le Maire, we've got to have those lorries.

PATRON: Didn't you hear that the roads must be kept free?

WOMAN: For you? While we have to wait here for the German bombers, is that it?

MAYOR *to the refugees*: Madame, Messieurs, don't panic. The lorries are all right. The hostelry just wants to save some valuable property from the threat of enemy action.

WOMAN *indignantly*: There you are! They want to evacuate crates, not people.

A noise of aeroplanes can be heard.

VOICES *from outside*: Stukas!

PATRON: They're diving.

The noise becomes louder and louder. The planes have dived. Everybody throws himself to the ground.

PATRON *when the planes have gone*: One could get killed that way. I must be off.

VOICES *from outside*: Hand over the lorries! Are we supposed to stay here and die?

PATRON: And the stuff hasn't been loaded! Philippe!

SIMONE *angrily*: This isn't the time to think of your provisions!

PATRON *astounded*: What's come over you, Simone?

SIMONE: At least we could give those people the food.

THE REFUGEE: Ah, it's food? Is it food they're trying to get away?

MAURICE: That's it.

WOMAN: And there wasn't even a drop of soup for us this morning.

MAURICE: It's the French he's trying to keep his food from, not the Germans.

WOMAN *runs back to the gate*: Open up, you! *As the policemen hold her back she shouts over the wall*: It's the hostelry's food stocks that's supposed to be going on the lorries!

PATRON: Philippe! Don't let her broadcast it.

VOICES *from outside*: They're sneaking out the food!—Break open the gate!—Aren't there any men here?—The idea is evacuate the food and leave us to the mercy of the German tanks!

The refugees break the gate in. The Mayor goes towards them.

MAYOR: Messieurs, Mesdames, no violence please! Every thing will be all right.

While the Mayor is negotiating at the gate a violent slanging-match breaks out in the courtyard. Two main groups form: on one side the Patron, the first Refugee and the Woman, together with Simone's parents, on the other Simone, the drivers, the other refugee and Père Gustave. Georges takes no part in the proceedings but carries on with his breakfast. Old Madame Soupeau has meanwhile come out of the hostelry unnoticed. She is very old and dressed entirely in black.

WOMAN: At least eighty people with no chance of transport.

PATRON: They'll take their bundles with them, Madame; why should I leave everything behind, they're my lorries, aren't they?

MAYOR: How much room do you need, Monsieur Soupeau?

PATRON: For at least sixty crates. Then the other lorry could take some thirty refugees.

WOMAN: So you'd leave fifty of us behind, would you?

MAYOR: What about managing with half a lorry, so that at least the children and the sick can go?

WOMAN: Do you mean to split up families? You wicked man!

PATRON: Another eight or ten could sit on the crates. *To Madame Machard:* I have your daughter to thank for this.

WOMAN: That child has more of a heart than all the rest of you put together.

MADAME MACHARD: Please excuse our Simone, Monsieur Henri. She got those ideas from her brother, it's dreadful.

SIMONE: You know the roads and can take a roundabout way so as to leave Route 20 clear for the troops.

ROBERT: Catch us driving his stuff through Noah's Flood!

SIMONE: But you'll take the sick and the children, won't you?

ROBERT: The refugees are a different matter.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: You keep out of it, Simone, that's my advice to you.

SIMONE: But our beautiful France is in grave danger, Père Gustave.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: She got that out of that damned book of hers. 'Is not our beautiful France in danger?'

ROBERT: Madame Soupeau's come down. She is beckoning you.

Simone goes to Madame Soupeau.

WOMAN *to the crowd at the gate*: Why don't we take the lorries, and the food too?

MADAME SOUPEAU: Simone, take this key and give these people as much food as they want. Père Gustave, Georges, you give them a hand.

MAYOR *loudly*: Bravo, Madame Soupeau!

PATRON: Maman, how can you? What are you doing down here anyway? You could catch your death in this draught. And our cellars have got 70,000 francs' worth of food and fine wines in them.

MADAME SOUPEAU *to the Mayor*: It is all at the disposal of the Saint-Martin council. *To the Patron, coldly*: Would you rather it was looted?

SIMONE *to the woman with the baby*: You'll get the food.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Simone! My son has followed your suggestion and just put the hostelry's entire stock of food at the disposal of the council. That leaves only the china and the silver, which will take up very little room. Is anybody going to load it for us?

WOMAN: And what about making room for us in the lorries?

MADAME SOUPEAU: Madame, we shall take as many of you as possible, and the hostelry will be honoured to feed those who stay behind.

THE FIRST REFUGEE *calling back towards the gate*: Would old Monsieur and Madame Creveux and the Meunier family stay behind if they're certain to get fed here?

CALL FROM THE BACKGROUND: It's possible, Jean.

WOMAN: Just a minute, if we're going to be fed here I want to stay behind too.

MADAME SOUPEAU: You will be welcome.

MAYOR *in the gateway*: Messieurs, Mesdames, help yourselves. The hostelry's stocks are at your disposal.

Some of the refugees move hesitantly towards the store room.

MADAME SOUPEAU: And bring us a few bottles of cognac, Simone, the 1884 Martell.

SIMONE: Very well, Madame. *She beckons to the refugees and goes into the store room with them, Père Gustave and Georges.*

PATRON: This will be the death of me, Maman.

ONE OF THE REFUGEES *drags out a crate of provisions with Georges's help and cheerfully mimics a street seller*: Fruit, ham, chocolate! Provisions for your journey! All free today!

PATRON *looking indignantly at the tins which Georges and the refugee are carrying across the yard towards the street*: Oh, my delicacies! That's foie gras!

MADAME SOUPEAU *softly*: Shut up. *To the refugee, politely*: I hope you enjoy it, Monsieur. *The other refugee, with Père Gustave's help, is dragging baskets full of food across the yard.*

PATRON *lamenting*: My 1915 Pommard! And there goes my caviar! And there . . .

MAYOR: There are times when one must make sacrifices, Henri. *Sceptically*: It's a matter of showing good will.

MAURICE *imitating the Patron's anguish*: 'My Pommard!' *He bursts out laughing and slaps Simone on the shoulder*. I'll load your china, Simone, for a sight like that!

PATRON *offended*: What's so funny? *Pointing to the disappearing baskets*: That's looting.

ROBERT *good-naturedly, carrying a basket*: Don't take it to heart, Monsieur Henri. Your china will get loaded all right.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Agreed. *She takes some tins and bottles of wine to Simone's parents*. Help yourselves. You too. Glasses for your parents, Simone.

Simone gives them glasses, then she takes a stool, puts it up against the wall and hands food from one of the baskets to the refugees on the other side.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Maurice, Robert, Père Gustave, get yourselves glasses too. *With a glance at the policemen*: I see the force is already equipped. *To the woman with the baby*: Take a sip with us, Madame. *To everybody*: Mesdames, Messieurs, let us raise our glasses to the future of our beautiful France.

PATRON *standing alone and apart from the rest*: What about me? *Fills a glass and joins the others.*

MAYOR *to Madame Soupeau*: Madame, in the name of the Saint-Martin council I thank the hostelry for its generous contribution. *Raising his glass*: To France. To our future.

GEORGES: Where's Simone?

Simone is still busy passing food over the wall to the refugees.

MAYOR: Simone!

Simone approaches, flushed and hesitating.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Yes, you must have a glass too, Simone.

We all owe you a debt of gratitude.

They all drink.

PATRON *to the drivers*: Friends again? Do you really think I was so set against taking the refugees? Maurice, Robert, I am an obstinate man but I can appreciate noble motives when I see them. I don't mind admitting my faults. You should do the same. Let's forget our little personal squabbles and firmly close our ranks against the common enemy. We'll shake hands on it.

The Patron starts with Robert, who shakes his hand with a sheepish smile; then Georges gives him his left hand. Then the Patron embraces the woman with the baby. Père Gustave, still angry, grumbles as he shakes hands. Then the Patron turns to the driver Maurice. Maurice makes no attempt to give him his hand.

PATRON: Oho! Are we all Frenchmen or aren't we?

SIMONE *reproachfully*: Maurice!

MAURICE *shakes hands with reluctance. Ironically*: Long live our new Saint Joan, unifier of the French!

Monsieur Machard boxes Simone's ears.

MADAME MACHARD: That's for your obstinacy in knowing better than the Patron.

PATRON *to Machard*: No, Monsieur, you shouldn't have done that. *He embraces Simone and comforts her.* Simone's my pet, Madame. I've a soft spot for her. *To the drivers*: But let's start loading up, boys. I'm sure Monsieur Machard will lend a hand too.

MAYOR *to his policemen*: How about your helping Monsieur Soupeau?

PATRON *with a deep bow to the woman with the baby*: Madame! *They disperse, as does the crowd outside. Only the Patron, the Mayor, Madame Soupeau, Simone, the two drivers and Georges remain on the stage.*

32 The Visions of Simone Machard

PATRON: Boys, I wouldn't have missed this for anything.

Devil take the caviar and the Pommard. All I want is unity!

MAURICE: And what about the brickworks?

PATRON *whose sore spot this is*: What about it? Well, what? All right, if any of the lorries are low on petrol send them to the brickworks. They can fill up there. Does that make you happy?

ROBERT: In Abbeville the German tanks filled up from the pumps on the road. No wonder they get ahead so fast.

GEORGES: Our 132nd Regiment was overrun by tanks before you could say How's your father? Two battalions wiped out in no time.

SIMONE *terrified*: Not the Seventh?

GEORGES: No, not the Seventh.

MAYOR: All stocks of petrol must be destroyed, Henri.

PATRON: Aren't you jumping the gun? One can't destroy everything just like that. We may still drive the enemy back. Eh, Simone? Tell Monsieur Chavez that France isn't lost yet, not by a long chalk. *To Madame Soupeau*: Well, it's au revoir, Maman. It worries me to leave you behind. *He kisses her*. But Simone will look after you. Au revoir, Simone. I'm not ashamed to thank you. You are a good Frenchwoman. *Kisses her*. As long as you're here nothing will fall into German hands, I'm sure. The hostelry must be left bare, we're agreed on that, aren't we? I'm sure you will do everything just as I would wish it. Au revoir, Philippe, old chap. *Embraces him, picks up his own luggage. Simone wants to help him. He waves her aside*: Leave it. Talk to my mother about what should be done with our food stocks.

Exit to the street.

SIMONE *running after the two drivers*: Maurice, Robert! *She kisses them on the cheeks. Maurice and Robert finally leave.*

VOICE OF THE RADIO ANNOUNCER: Attention please! German tank formations have been sighted at Tours. *This announcement is repeated intermittently up to the end of the scene.*

MAYOR *pale, beyond himself*: They could be here tonight.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Don't be such an old woman, Philippe.

SIMONE: Madame, Père Gustave and Georges and I will just run over to the brickworks. We'll destroy the petrol stocks.

MADAME SOUPEAU: You heard what the *Patron* ordered. He asked us to do nothing in a hurry. You must leave some of the decisions to us, my dear.

SIMONE: But Madame, Maurice says the Germans move so quickly.

MADAME SOUPEAU: That's enough, Simone. *Turns to leave.* There's a nasty draught here. *To the Mayor:* Thank you, Philippe, for everything you've done for the hostelry today. *In the doorway:* By the way, Simone, now they've all gone away I'll probably be closing the hostelry down. Give me back the key of the food store. *Simone, deeply hurt, gives her the key.* I think it would be best for you to go home now to your parents. I've been well satisfied with your services.

SIMONE *who cannot understand:* But can't I help when the council comes for the food?

Madame Soupeau, without a further word, disappears into the hostelry.

SIMONE *after a pause, haltingly:* Have I been dismissed, Monsieur le Maire?

MAYOR: I'm afraid so. But don't be offended. You heard her, she's been well satisfied with your services. Coming from her, that means a lot, Simone.

SIMONE *flatly:* Yes, Monsieur le Maire.

Exit Mayor dejectedly. Simone's glance follows him.

Second Dream of Simone Machard

Night of 15-16 June

A confusion of festive music. A waiting group looms out of the darkness: the Mayor in royal robes, the Patron and the Colonel both in armour, carrying field marshals' batons; the Colonel is wearing his dustcoat over his armour.

COLONEL: Our Joan has taken Orléans and Rheims after first clearing the whole length of Route 20 for our troops' advance. We must bestow great honours on her, clearly.

MAYOR: That is my business as King, Monsieur. The dignitaries and great families of France now gathering here will bow deeply before her.

In the background the names and titles of dignitaries and great French families are called out continually till the end of the scene, as though they were assembling.

MAYOR: By the way, didn't I hear she had been dismissed? *Discreetly:* On the express wish of the Queen Mother, the proud Queen Isabeau, I understand.

PATRON: I know nothing about that, I wasn't there. That would be quite unacceptable. Simone is my pet. Of course she'll stay.

The Mayor says something incomprehensible in the dream language, apparently something evasive.

COLONEL: Here she comes.

Simone marches in, wearing a helmet and sword, preceded by her bodyguard consisting of Maurice, Robert and Georges, all dressed in armour. From the darkness Simone's parents have emerged together with the employees of the hostelry, 'the People'. The bodyguard uses its long pikes to thrust them back.

ROBERT: Make way for the Maid!

MADAME MACHARD *craning her neck*: There she is. That helmet quite suits her.

MAYOR *advancing*: Dear Joan, what can we do for you? Wish yourself something.

SIMONE *with a bow*: First of all, King Charles, my beloved home town must continue to be fed from the hostelry's food stores. As you know, I have been sent to help the poor and needy. Taxes are to be remitted.

MAYOR: That goes without saying. What more?

SIMONE: Next, Paris must be taken. The second campaign must commence without delay.

PATRON *astonished*: A second campaign?

COLONEL: What will old Madame Soupeau, the proud Queen Isabeau, have to say to that?

SIMONE: I need an army with which I can decisively defeat the enemy, and I need it this year, King Charles.

MAYOR *smiling*: Dear Joan, we are well satisfied with your services. Coming from us, that means a lot. So be content. You must leave some of the decisions to us. I am now closing the hostelry down, so you can go home. But before that you will of course be raised to the nobility. Lend me your sword (I have mislaid mine) so I may declare you Dame of France.

SIMONE *hands him the sword and kneels*: Here's the key. *The confused music now includes an organ and choir, and suggests festive church ceremonies in the distance. The Mayor solemnly touches Simone's shoulder with the sword.*

BODYGUARD AND PEOPLE: Long live the Maid! Long live the Dame of France!

SIMONE *as the Mayor is about to leave*: One moment, King Charles. You're forgetting to give back my sword. *Urgently*: The English are not defeated yet, and the Burgundians are raising a new army, even more terrifying than their first. The most difficult tasks still lie ahead.

MAYOR: I am greatly obliged to you for your offer. And thank you for everything else, Joan. *Hands over Simone's sword to the Patron*. Take it safely to Bordeaux, Henri. We for our part must talk in private now with old Madame Soupeau, the proud Queen Isabeau. Good-bye, Joan, it was a great pleasure meeting you. *Exit with Patron and Colonel.*

SIMONE *very frightened*: But listen to me, the enemy is coming!

The music dies down to a murmur, the light dims, the crowd disappears in the darkness.

SIMONE *remains still, then*: André! Help me! Descend, arch-angel! Speak to me! The English are gathering their army, and Burgundy has gone over, and our men are running away.

THE ANGEL *appearing on the garage roof, reproachfully*: Joan, tell me, where has your sword gone?

SIMONE *confused, apologetically*: They dubbed me Dame with it, then they didn't give it back. *Quietly, ashamed*: I've been dismissed.

THE ANGEL: That explains it. *After a silence*: Maid, hear me: don't let them pack you off. Hold out. France demands it. Better not return yet to your parents; they'd worry themselves to a skeleton over your dismissal. Moreover you promised to keep your brother's job in the garage warm for him, because one day he will be returning. Joan, remain here! How could you abandon your divine mission when you know the invader might arrive from one moment to the next?

SIMONE: Should we go on fighting even after the enemy has won?

THE ANGEL: Do you feel the night wind blowing?

SIMONE: Yes.

THE ANGEL: Is there not a tree in the yard?

SIMONE: Yes, the poplar.

THE ANGEL: Do its leaves rustle when the wind blows?

SIMONE: Yes, distinctly.

THE ANGEL: Then you must not quit the fight even if defeated.

SIMONE: But how can I fight if I have no sword?

THE ANGEL:

After the conqueror occupies your town

He must feel he's isolated, on his own.

No one of you must ever permit him to come in:

He can't count as a guest, so treat him like vermin.

No place for him shall be laid, no meal prepared

Every stick of furniture must have disappeared.
 Whatever can't be burned has to be hidden
 Pour all your milk away, bury each crust of bread as bidden
 Till he's screaming: Help me! Till he's known as: Devilry.
 Till he's eating: ashes. Till he's living in: débris.
 He must be given no mercy, no kind of aid
 And your town must be a memory, from the map let it fade.
 Let each prospect be blank, every track bare and savage
 And provide no vestige of shelter, only dust and sewage.
 Go forth now and ravage!

The stage darkens. Above the music the Angel's voice can repeatedly be heard, softly and persistently calling 'Go forth and ravage!' as the rumble of heavy tanks becomes evident.

3

THE FIRE

(a)

Old Madame Soupeau, dressed entirely in black, together with, behind her, Thérèse the chambermaid and Père Gustave in his best suit, are standing at the gate to the yard waiting for the German captain. Georges, now dressed as a civilian, is leaning against the garage in which Simone is hiding from Madame Soupeau and listening to him. Rumbling of passing tanks outside.

SIMONE: She's white as a sheet and scared.

GEORGES: She imagines they're going to take her hostage and then shoot her. She was in a state last night and Thérèse heard her shouting out: 'The butchers will kill us all.' And yet out of sheer greed she stayed, and now she's waiting for the German captain to come.—I can't understand why you don't want her to see you. Is something the matter?

SIMONE *lying*: No, no. But if she sees me she'll send me away.

For fear the Germans might do something to me.

GEORGES *distrustfully*: Is that the only reason you don't want her to see you?

SIMONE *changing the subject*: Do you suppose the Germans have caught up with Maurice and Robert?

GEORGES: Maybe.—Tell me, why did you move out of your room in the main building?

SIMONE *lying*: Oh, there's room now in the drivers' quarters. Do you suppose André will be back soon?

GEORGES: I doubt it.—She hasn't dismissed you, has she, Simone?

SIMONE *lying*: No.

GEORGES: Here come the Germans.

From the street comes the German captain, accompanied by Captain Fétain. At the gate Madame Soupeau and the two officers exchange civilities. Their words cannot be distinguished.

GEORGES: That captain and crypto-fascist is taking a real pride in introducing our hereditary enemy to Madame. All very civil to one another. They're sniffing and each seems to find the other's smell all right. Our hereditary enemy is a proper gent, educated too, which is obviously a great relief to Madame. *Whispers*: They're coming this way.

Simone steps back. Madame Soupeau leads the two gentlemen across the yard into the hostelry, with Thérèse the chambermaid following.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *goes over to Georges and Simone after Madame has whispered something to him*: Madame no longer wishes to see that mob from the hall here. It might upset the German gentlemen. As it turns out, the *Patron* might just as well have stayed.

GEORGES: Their first announcement on the radio was 'Those who respect law and order have nothing to fear'.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: That one actually says 'please' when he wants something. 'Please show my batman my rooms.'

SIMONE: All the same, he is the enemy.

Exit Père Gustave into the store room.

GEORGES: Has your cousin had any more dreams?

SIMONE: Yes, last night.

GEORGES: About the Maid again?

SIMONE *nodding*: She's been raised to the nobility.

GEORGES: That must have been a great time for her.

SIMONE: Taxes have been remitted in her home town, just like it says in the book.

GEORGES *quite sharply*: But the hostelry's stores haven't been handed over to the council as promised.

SIMONE *embarrassed*: My cousin didn't say anything about that.

GEORGES: Aha.

SIMONE: Monsieur Georges, if a certain person appears as an angel, as sometimes happens in my cousin's dreams—does it mean the person's dead?

GEORGES: Not necessarily. It only means the dreamer is sometimes afraid he might be dead.—What else has your cousin got to do?

SIMONE: Oh, a whole lot.

GEORGES: Did something unpleasant happen in that dream?

SIMONE: Why?

GEORGES: Because you've so little to say about it.

SIMONE *slowly*: Nothing unpleasant happened.

GEORGES: I only ask because it strikes me a certain somebody might take these dreams seriously, Simone, and forget that we're living in broad daylight and not in a dream.

SIMONE *bursting out*: Then I shan't tell you any more about my cousin's dreams, Monsieur Georges.

The woman with the baby and another refugee come into the courtyard.

SIMONE: They are coming for the food. Break the news to them as gently as you can, Monsieur Georges. *She hides and watches the scene.*

GEORGES *stepping forward*: Madame.

WOMAN: The tanks have arrived.

MAN: There are three of them parked outside the Mairie.

WOMAN: Enormous ones. At least twenty feet long, they are.

MAN *pointing to the German sentry*: Careful.

MADAME SOUPEAU *coming out of the hostelry*: Georges, Père Gustave! Take the Herr Hauptmann his hors-d'œuvres in the breakfast room.—What do you people want?

WOMAN: We've come about the provisions, Madame.
Twenty-one people have stayed behind in the hall.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Georges, I've told you to keep beggars away from the hostelry.

MAN: What do you mean: beggars?

MADAME SOUPEAU: Why don't you tell your people that from now on they must deal with the German Kommandant, not with me. The good old days are finished.

WOMAN: Is that what we're supposed to go back and tell the people in the hall, after we have advised them all to stay so you could get your china off?

MADAME SOUPEAU: I would advise you not to inform on me, Madame.

WOMAN: Don't try to hide behind the Germans.

MADAME SOUPEAU *over her shoulder*: Honoré!

WOMAN: The baby and I could have been with my sister in Bordeaux by now. You promised to see we had enough food, Madame.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Because you blackmailed me into it, Madame.

CAPITAINE *appearing behind her*: After a good deal of looting. But now, my friends, law and order will be restored. *Pointing at the German sentries*: Would you like me to have you escorted out under guard? Don't get excited, Marie, remember you have a weak heart

WOMAN: You're a lot of swine.

MAN *holding her back and leading her away*: Times will change, Madame.

MADAME SOUPEAU: It's starting to stink of sewage here. All the scum of the northern cities flooding into our peaceful villages. We're getting the habitués of the cheapest wine bars. Sooner or later there'll be a bloody reckoning.—Père Gustave, breakfast for four!

CAPITAINE *to Georges*: Here, you! The Mayor will be coming here. Tell him I want a word with him before he sees the Herr Hauptmann. *He leads Madame Soupeau back into the hostelry. When they have both disappeared, Simone runs after the refugees.*

GEORGES: Père Gustave! The hors-d'œuvres for the Herr Hauptmann!

PÈRE GUSTAVE *from the store*: I get it. Only the best for the Herr Hauptmann.

Simone returns breathless.

GEORGES: What did you tell them?

SIMONE: That they can tell the people in the hall that they'll get their food. I'm going to do it tonight.

GEORGES: Of course, you've still got the key.

SIMONE: It was promised them.

GEORGES: Better be careful. That's stealing.

SIMONE: The *Patron* said: 'As long as you're here, Simone, nothing will fall into German hands, I'm sure!'

GEORGES: That's not the way the old lady's talking.

SIMONE: Perhaps they're forcing her.

The Mayor appears at the gate.

SIMONE *flying towards him*: Monsieur le Maire, what are we to do?

MAYOR: How's this, Simone? I've got good news for you: I've put forward your father for a job with the council. You have deserved that, Simone. Then it won't matter so much that you have lost your job.

SIMONE *whispering*: Monsieur le Maire, is it true there are three tanks on the square outside the Mairie? *Even more quietly*: That petrol is still there, you know.

MAYOR *absently*: Yes, that's bad. *Suddenly*: What are you still in the hostelry for, Simone, anyway?

SIMONE: Surely something must be done about the petrol, Monsieur le Maire. Can't you do something? They're bound to ask Madame Soupeau about it.

MAYOR: I don't think we need to worry about Madame Soupeau, Simone.

SIMONE: I could do something. I know my way round the brickworks.

MAYOR *vaguely*: I hope you're not thinking of doing anything rash, Simone. The Commune of Saint-Martin is a great responsibility for me, you know.

42 The Visions of Simone Machard

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur le Maire.

MAYOR: I can't think why I'm talking to you like this. You're still a child, Simone. But I think we each of us have to do what we can now, eh?

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur le Maire. Suppose the brickworks burnt down . . .

MAYOR: For God's sake. You mustn't even think of such a thing. And now I have to go in. This is the hardest path I have ever trodden. *He is about to go in.*

The Capitaine comes out.

CAPITAINE: Monsieur Chavez. You're just in time for breakfast.

MAYOR: I have had it.

CAPITAINE: Pity. You don't seem to have got the picture quite right. Yesterday a number of undesirable incidents occurred here with the connivance of the authorities. It is regrettable that this impudent attempt on the part of certain elements to exploit France's collapse for their own selfish ends was not stamped on at once. Our German guests expect at least a polite gesture from us. For example the German Kommandant has already been told about the stocks in a particular brickworks. You might bear that in mind, Chavez. Perhaps it will improve your appetite. After you, Monsieur le Maire.

MAYOR *very unsure*: After you, mon Capitaine.

They go into the hostelry. Père Gustave comes out of the store and follows them.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *as he carries in a plate of delicacies*: Hope it keeps fine for you, have a good trip. How the moneybags stick together, eh, Georges? They're selling France like they sell their fancy food! *Exit.*

Simone has followed the scene closely. She has sat down.

GEORGES: Simone! What's the matter with you? Simone! *Simone does not reply. Georges shakes her, but suddenly becomes immobile like a statue. During Simone's Daydream which follows, Père Gustave's phrase 'How the moneybags stick together' is quietly and mechanically repeated.*

Daydream of Simone Machard

20 June

Confused martial music. The hostelry's back wall becomes transparent. In front of an immense tapestry sit the Mayor (as King Charles), the Capitaine (Duke of Burgundy), the Hauptmann as the English Commander-in-Chief with his sword across his knees, and Madame Soupeau (the Queen Mother Isabeau) all playing cards at a marble-topped table.

MADAME SOUPEAU: I no longer wish to see that mob, my lord.

HAUPTMANN: Come, hide behind us, Queen Isabeau. I'll have the yard cleared, and then law and order will prevail. Trumped you!

MAYOR: Hark now! Is that a sound of drums I hear?

Joan's drum can be heard in the distance.

CAPITAINE: Play your ace of clubs. I hear nothing.

The drumming stops.

MAYOR: No? I fear, Duke, that my Joan has met with trouble and is in need of help.

CAPITAINE: The ten of hearts. I need peace if I am to sell my wine.

HAUPTMANN: How much is your fancy food, Madame?

MADAME SOUPEAU: Whose deal? Ten thousand pieces of silver, my lord.

MAYOR: But this time I am certain. She is in danger, in mortal danger. I must hasten to her and help her destroy everything. *He gets up holding his cards.*

CAPITAINE: Take care. If you go now it will be the last time. You have not got the picture right. How can one play with all these interruptions? Jack of clubs.

MAYOR *sitting down again*: Very well then.

MADAME SOUPEAU *boxing his ears*: That is for your obstinacy.

HAUPTMANN: Permit me, Queen Isabeau. *He throws some coins on the table, counting*: One, two, three . . .

GEORGES *shaking Simone to wake her from her daydream, while the Hauptmann goes on counting*. Simone! You're dreaming with your eyes wide open.

SIMONE: Are you coming with me, Monsieur Georges?

GEORGES *staring at his bandaged arm; joyfully*: Simone, I can move it again.

SIMONE: That's good. But we must go to the brickworks, Monsieur Georges. We haven't much time. Pere Gustave, you must come too. Quickly.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *coming out of the hostelry*: Me? They've put up a poster: 'Saboteurs will be executed.' They're not joking.

SIMONE: The Mayor wishes it.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: The Mayor's a creep.

SIMONE: But you'll come with me, Monsieur Georges? It's for André's sake. I'd never know how to blow up so much petrol. Does one have to set the whole brickworks alight?

GEORGES: Didn't you get it? I can move my arm again.

SIMONE *looking at him*: So neither of you wants to come with me?

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Here's another of them.

A German soldier comes into the yard carrying luggage. As soon as Simone sees him she quickly runs off in fear.

THE GERMAN SOLDIER *throws down the luggage, takes off his steel helmet, wipes his brow and tries amiably to communicate by gestures*: Hauptmann? Inside?

GEORGES *gesticulating*: There. In the hostelry. Cigarette?

THE GERMAN SOLDIER *taking the cigarette and grinning*: War shit. *Imitates the action of shooting, negative gesture.*

GEORGES *laughingly*: Bang bang! *Makes a raspberry; both laugh.*

THE GERMAN SOLDIER: Hauptmann Arsehole.

GEORGES: What? What did you say?

THE GERMAN SOLDIER *mimicking the Hauptmann and his monocle*: Merde.

GEORGES *catches on, and in turn cheerfully mimicks the Capitaine and Madame Soupeau*: Merde the lot.

They laugh again, then the German soldier picks up his luggage and goes inside.

GEORGES *to Père Gustave*: O my, O my, how easily we could get on.

PERE GUSTAVE: Better be careful.

GEORGES: And how. Now that my arm is mending.

From the hostelry come the Hauptmann, the Capitaine, the Mayor and Madame Soupeau.

CAPITAINE: Herr Hauptmann, I'm delighted we understand one another so well.

HAUPTMANN: Madame, I wish to thank you for volunteering to let us use your petrol. Not that the German army is short. But we accept it as a token of good will and co-operative-ness.

MADAME SOUPEAU: It's not far to the brickworks.

HAUPTMANN: I will tell the tanks to go there.

The sky has reddened. The group stands as if petrified. Distant explosions.

HAUPTMANN: What's that?

CAPITAINE *hoarsely*: The brickworks.

(b)

It is night. There is a hammering at the gate. Georges comes out of his room and opens up to find the Patron and the two drivers outside.

PATRON: How are things, Georges? Is my mother all right? So the hostelry is still standing. I feel as if I'd been through the Flood. Hullo, Simone.

Simone, scantily dressed, comes from the drivers' quarters. Robert embraces her. Père Gustave has also appeared.

ROBERT: Oh, so you're living in our quarters now? *He dances around with her, humming:*

Joe the strangler came back home

Rosa was still there

And Mama had a chartreuse

And Papa a beer.

PATRON: What's been happening?

46 The Visions of Simone Machard

GEORGES: A German captain has moved in. Madame Soupeau is a bit tired because of the brickworks inquiry. The German captain . . .

PATRON: What inquiry?

SIMONE: Monsieur Henri, everything's been done as you wanted. I took some more food to the hall last night.

PATRON: I'm asking you about the brickworks.

GEORGES *hesitantly*: It burnt down, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON: Burnt down?—The Germans? *Georges shakes his head.* Carelessness? *Looks from one to the other.* No reply. The authorities?

GEORGES: No.

PATRON: That scum from the hall.

GEORGES: No, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON: Arson, then. *He wails as if he had caught his foot in a snare.* Who? *No reply.* Oh, I see, you're all in this together. *In cold fury*: So you've taken to crime, how nice. I might have guessed it after the way you showed your gratitude my last day here. 'You can stuff your china,' eh, Père Gustave? Very well then, I accept your challenge. We shall see.

GEORGES: It happened because of the Germans, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON *sarcastically*: Oh, I see, it was my brickworks but the arson was against the Germans. You were so blinded by hatred, so set on destruction that you bit the hand that fed you; is that it? *Abruptly*: Simone!

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON: Now tell me at once who did it.

SIMONE: Me, Monsieur.

PATRON: What? You dared . . . ? *Pulls her by the arm.* Who told you to? Who was behind it?

SIMONE: Nobody, Monsieur.

PATRON: Don't lie to me, do you hear? I won't stand for . . .

GEORGES: Please leave her alone, Monsieur Henri. She isn't lying.

PATRON: Who ordered you to?

SIMONE: I did it for my brother.

PATRON: Ah, André! He incited you against your *Patron*, eh? 'Us underdogs', eh? I always knew he was a Red. Who helped you?

SIMONE: Nobody, Monsieur.

PATRON: And why did you do it?

SIMONE: Because of the petrol, Monsieur.

PATRON: And that meant you had to set the entire brick-works alight? Why couldn't you just have let the petrol out?

SIMONE: I didn't know how.

GEORGES: She's a child, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON: Fire-raisers! All of you! Criminals! Get off my property this moment, Père Gustave! Georges, you're fired! You people are worse than the Germans.

GEORGES: Very well, Monsieur Henri. *He walks over and stands beside Simone.*

PATRON: Didn't you say something about an inquiry? What about it?

GEORGES: The Germans are investigating.

PATRON: You mean it happened after the Germans got here?

GEORGES: Yes.

PATRON *sits down in disbelief and desperation*: That's the last straw. It means the hostelry is finished! *Hides his head in his hands.*

PÈRE GUSTAVE: You know, Monsieur Henri, they were saying very good things in Saint-Martin yesterday about the hostelry. 'Right under the Germans' noses', they said.

PATRON: They'll court-martial me. That's what you've done for me. *Desperately*: I'll be shot.

SIMONE *stepping forward*: Monsieur, you'll not be shot, because it was me that did it. Come with me to the German captain and I'll admit everything, Monsieur.

MAURICE: That's out of the question.

PATRON: Why is it out of the question? She's a child. Nobody will touch her.

MAURICE: Tell the Germans it was her if you like, but we'll get her away. Get dressed at once, Simone.

48 The Visions of Simone Machard

PATRON: That'll make us her accomplices.

SIMONE: Maurice, I must stay. André wants me to, I know it.

PATRON: It all depends whether she did it before the Germans got here or after. If she did it before, it was an act of war and they can't do a thing to her.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *ingratiatingly*: They put up a poster right away saying saboteurs would be shot, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON *to Simone*: Did you see that poster?

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON: What did it look like?

SIMONE: It was printed on red paper.

PATRON: Is that right? *Père Gustave nods*. Now I'm going to ask the question the Germans will ask you, Simone. Did you read it after you started the fire? If so, then it was not sabotage, Simone, and they can't touch you.

SIMONE: I read it before, Monsieur.

PATRON: You didn't get what I was driving at. If you read it afterwards the Germans will probably just hand you over to the Mayor, because then it was a purely French concern, and that means you'll be out of it, Simone. Do you get that?

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur. But I read it before.

PATRON: She's confused. Père Gustave, you were in the yard at the time. When did Simone leave?

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Before the poster was put up, of course, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON: There you are.

SIMONE: You're mistaken, Père Gustave. You told me yourself before I left that the poster said I mustn't.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: I told you nothing of the sort.

PATRON: Of course not.

MAURICE: Don't you realize, Monsieur Henri, that the child refuses to join in your monkey tricks? She's not ashamed of what she did.

SIMONE: But the Patron's only trying to help me, Maurice.

PATRON: Exactly. You trust me, don't you, Simone? So listen carefully. It's the enemy we'll be talking to now. That makes all the difference, get me? They'll ask you lots of

questions, but you must only answer in a way that's good for Saint-Martin and good for the French. Simple enough, eh?

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur, but I don't want to say anything that's not right.

PATRON: I understand that. You don't want to say anything that's untrue. Not even to the enemy. Good. I respect that. There's only one thing I would ask you: say nothing, leave it to us. Leave it to me. *Almost in tears*: I'll stand by you through thick and thin, you know that. We'll all stand by you. We are Frenchmen.

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur.

The Patron takes Simone by the hand and leads her into the hostelry.

MAURICE: She didn't read her book right.

4

THE TRIAL

(a)

Fourth Dream of Simone Machard

Night of 21-2 June

A jumble of music. In the courtyard stands the Hauptmann in armour and Simone as Maid of Orleans, surrounded by soldiers in black chain-mail decorated with swastikas; one of whom, identifiable as the Hauptmann's batman, holds a swastika banner.

HAUPTMANN: We've got you now, Joan of Orleans, and you are going to be handed over to a court which will decide why we should condemn you to die at the stake.

Exeunt all except Simone and the standard bearer.

SIMONE: What kind of a court is that?

50 The Visions of Simone Machard

STANDARD BEARER: Not the ordinary kind. It's ecclesiastical.

SIMONE: I'm admitting nothing.

STANDARD BEARER: That's fine, but the trial seems to be already over.

SIMONE: You mean they sentence you before examining you?

STANDARD BEARER: Of course.

People who have apparently been attending the trial leave the hostelry and cross the yard into the street.

PERE GUSTAVE *as he crosses the yard, to Thérèse*: Death! At her age!

THÉRÈSE: Who'd have expected that, even two days back?

SIMONE *pulling her by the sleeve*: Did Hitler come himself?

Thérèse seems not to notice her and leaves with Père Gustave. Simone's parents cross the yard, the father in uniform, the mother in black.

MADAME MACHARD *sobbing*: She was always very obstinate even as a little girl. Just like her brother. It's a terrible blow for Monsieur Machard. Now that he's working for the council, too! What a disgrace! *Both exeunt.*

The brothers Maurice and Robert cross the yard.

ROBERT: She didn't look at all bad.

MAURICE: Especially in that frilly blue dress.

SIMONE *pulling Robert by the sleeve*: Did you see the judges?

ROBERT *casually*: Yes, of course.

SIMONE: Shall I see them too?

ROBERT: Sure to. They'll come out here and sentence you to death. *Exeunt both.*

A LOUD VOICE: Pray silence for the Cardinals and Archbishops of the Ecclesiastical Court of Rouen! Sentence on the Maid of Orleans will now be pronounced. First the staff will be broken over the Maid.

Out of the hostelry steps one of the judges, adorned in magnificent cardinal's robes. He hides his identity behind a breviary, and crosses the yard. He stops behind a bronze tripod with a kettle on it, turns his back, claps the breviary shut, takes a small staff out of his sleeve, solemnly breaks it, and throws the pieces into the kettle.

THE LOUD VOICE: His eminence the Bishop of Beauvais.
For liberating the city of Orleans: death.

Before moving on he looks back indifferently over his shoulder. It is the Colonel.

SIMONE: Monsieur le Colonel!

Another judge steps out of the hostelry and repeats the procedure.

THE LOUD VOICE: For liberating the city of Orleans and for
feeding the rats of Orleans with stolen food: death.

The second judge likewise shows his face. It is the Capitaine.

SIMONE: Monsieur le Capitaine!

A third judge steps from the hostelry and repeats the procedure.

THE LOUD VOICE: For launching an attack on the city of
Paris and the black market petrol: death.

The third judge is the Patron.

SIMONE: But Monsieur Henri, it's me you're sentencing!

The Patron makes his usual gesture of helplessness, and a fourth judge steps out of the hostelry and repeats the procedure.

THE LOUD VOICE: For uniting all Frenchmen: death.

The fourth judge grips his breviary too convulsively, and drops it.

He tries to pick it up quickly, and is recognized: it is the Mayor.

SIMONE: The Mayor himself! Oh, Monsieur Chavez!

THE LOUD VOICE: Your supreme judges have spoken,
Joan.

SIMONE: But they're all Frenchmen. *To the standard bearer:*
There must be some mistake.

STANDARD BEARER: No, Mademoiselle, this is a French
court.

The four judges have stopped at the entrance to the yard.

MAYOR: You must know that from your book. Of course the
Maid is sentenced by French judges, and rightly so since she
is French.

SIMONE *confused*: That's true. I know from the book that I'll
be sentenced to death. But I would like to know why. I
never really understood that part.

MAYOR *to the judges*: She is asking for a trial.

CAPITAINE: What would be the point of that as she's already
been sentenced?

MAYOR: Well, at least the case would have been examined, the defendant interrogated, and everything discussed and weighed up.

COLONEL: And found inadequate. *Shrugging his shoulders:* But very well then, if *you* insist on it.

PATRON: We're not prepared, you know.

They put their heads together and confer in whispers. Père Gustave carries out a table and puts plates and candles on it. The judges sit down at it.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: The refugees from the hall are outside. They're asking to be admitted to the trial.

PATRON: Out of the question. I'm expecting my mother, and she doesn't like the way they smell.

CAPITAINE *calling into the background:* The trial will be held in camera. In the interests of the state.

PATRON: Where are the papers? Probably gone astray again, like everything else in this country.

MAYOR: Where is the plaintiff?

The judges look at each other.

MAYOR: Without a plaintiff it can't be official.

PATRON: Père Gustave, go and get us a plaintiff from the store room.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *calls from the gate towards the street:* The High Ecclesiastical Court of Rouen calls on anybody who has a complaint to bring against the Maid.—Nobody? *He repeats his challenge. Then to the judges:* Here comes the plaintiff: Isabeau the Queen Mother, supporter of the treacherous Duke of Burgundy and of the hereditary enemy.

MADAME SOUPEAU *in armour comes out of the hostelry and greets the judges, who bow low before her. With the routine amiability of a great hôtelière:* Good evening, mon Capitaine. Don't get up. Don't let me disturb you. *Over her shoulder into the hostelry:* One portion of Alsace-Lorraine for Monsieur le Capitaine, well done! How would you like your peasants, Connétable? I hope you are satisfied with the service this time, mon Colonel. *Pointing to Simone:* Everything would have been saved if this Maid of Orleans hadn't interfered in

the negotiations. Everything: France and the brickworks too. You are too weak, gentlemen. Who makes the decisions here, the Church or a servant from the hostelry? *Starts shouting like one possessed*: I demand and insist that this person be put to death immediately for heresy and disobedience, not to say obstinacy. Heads must roll. Blood must flow. She must be bloodily exterminated. She must serve as a bloody example. *Exhausted*: My smelling-salts.

CAPITAINE: A chair for the Queen Mother.

Père Gustave brings her a chair.

PATRON: Isn't your armour rather tight, Maman? Why are you wearing it, anyhow?

MADAME SOUPEAU: Well, I'm at war too, aren't I?

PATRON: At war? What war?

MADAME SOUPEAU: My war. Against this rebellious Maid who has been stirring up the people in the village hall.

CAPITAINE *sharply*: Shh! *To Simone*: What right had you to lead the French to war, Maid?

SIMONE: An angel told me to, venerable Bishop of Beauvais.

The judges look at each other.

PATRON: I see, an angel. What sort of an angel?

SIMONE: From the church. The one to the left of the altar.

CAPITAINE: Never set eyes on him.

MAYOR *friendly*: What did this angel look like? Describe him.

SIMONE: He was very young and had a beautiful voice, honourable sirs. He told me I must . . .

COLONEL *interrupting*: What he told you is of no interest to us. What sort of an accent did he have? Was it an educated one? Or the other kind?

SIMONE: I don't know. He just spoke.

CAPITAINE: Aha.

PATRON: What sort of clothes did this angel wear?

SIMONE: He was beautifully dressed. His robe was made of stuff you'd pay twenty or thirty francs a yard for in Tours.

CAPITAINE: Do I understand you correctly, Simone or Joan, as the case may be? So he wasn't one of those great

magnificent angels whose robes cost perhaps as much as two or three hundred francs a yard?

SIMONE: I don't know.

COLONEL: What condition was the robe in? Quite worn?

SIMONE: The angel was just a bit chipped, around the sleeve.

COLONEL: I see. Chipped around the sleeve. As if he'd had to wear it to work too? Was it torn?

SIMONE: No, not torn.

CAPITAINE: All the same, it was chipped. And at the place where it had been chipped, the sleeve could quite well have got torn with all that work. Perhaps the reason why you didn't see it was that it was exactly where the colour had rubbed off. But it could have been, couldn't it? *Simone does not reply.*

COLONEL: Did the angel say anything that a person of quality might have said? Think that over.

SIMONE: General things, mostly.

MAYOR: Did the angel resemble anyone you knew?

SIMONE *quietly*: My brother André.

COLONEL: Ah, a private soldier. Private Machard. Gentlemen, now it's out. A most peculiar angel, I must say.

MADAME SOUPEAU: A real public-bar angel, a gutter seraph! In any case now we know where those 'Voices' come from. From the taverns and the sewage farms.

SIMONE: You shouldn't run down the angel, Reverend Sirs.

PATRON: If you look on page 124 of your book you will see that we are the Ecclesiastical Court, in fact the highest authority on earth.

COLONEL: Don't you think that we, the high Cardinals of France, know the will of God better than some jumped-up angel?

CAPITAINE: Where does God dwell, Joan? Below or above? And where did your so-called angel come from? From below. So who sent him? God? Or could it have been the Devil?

MADAME SOUPEAU: The Devil! Joan of Orleans, the voices you heard came from the Devil.

SIMONE *strongly*: No, no! Not from the Devil!

CAPITAINE: Call him, call your angel! Perhaps he'll defend you, great Maid of Orleans. Usher, do your duty.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *calls*: The Supreme Ecclesiastical Court of Rouen calls upon the angel, name unknown, who, so the Maid alleges, has appeared to her on several occasions, to come and bear witness on her behalf.

Simone looks at the garage roof. It remains empty. Père Gustave repeats his summons. Simone, in great anguish, looks at the smiling judges. Then she crouches down and in her confusion begins to drum on the ground. However, there is no sound and the garage roof remains empty.

SIMONE: It does not resound here. What has happened? It doesn't resound. French soil no longer resounds. It doesn't resound here.

MADAME SOUPEAU *stepping towards her*: Are you in the least aware who is France?

(b)

Morning of 22 June. Over the gate the French flag is at half-mast and is swathed in black ribbon. Georges, Robert and Père Gustave are listening to Maurice as he reads to them from a black-bordered newspaper.

MAURICE: The Marshal says the honour of France is not impaired by the armistice terms.

PERE GUSTAVE: That's a great comfort to me.

MAURICE: Me too. The Marshal goes on to say that a new order and discipline are needed and that the French people must gather round him and look to him as a father.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: That's it. André has stopped fighting, they've laid down their arms. Now he has got to be brought under strict discipline.

GEORGES: Good thing Simone's no longer here.

From the hostelry comes the Hauptmann, bareheaded and beltless, smoking an after-breakfast cigar. He gives them an indifferent

glance, strolls to the gate, briefly looks up the street and returns at a quickened pace into the hostelry.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: He never liked having a child mixed up in this.

GEORGES: I'm surprised at her running away, I really am. She always said she'd stay whatever happened. Something must have scared her. She simply disappeared through the laundry-room window.

Enter the Patron from the hostelry, rubbing his hands.

PATRON: Maurice, Robert! Go and unload the crates with the china and silver! *Looking round, then quietly:* I'm not going to ask if any of you helped a certain person to get away last night. What's past is past, and I don't mind telling you it's the best thing that could have happened in the circumstances. Not that there was any real danger. The Germans are not cannibals. Besides, your *Patron* knows how to talk to them. As I told the German captain at breakfast, 'What's the point of it all? Before reading the notice, or after reading the notice! It's a farce. A child: what do you expect? A little soft in the head perhaps, a bit psycho . . . Tanks! Right, stop them, destroy everything! And playing with matches of course is always good fun. A political act? More like a childish prank!'

GEORGES *looking at the others:* A childish prank? What do you mean by that, Monsieur Henri?

PATRON: I said the same thing to my mother: she's a child, I said.

GEORGES: That child was the only person in the hostelry that did her duty. Nobody else lifted a finger. And the people of Saint-Martin won't forget it, Monsieur Henri.

PATRON *irritably:* Why don't you people get on with *your* duty? Get those crates unloaded. I'm only glad it's all over. I'm sure the Herr Hauptmann won't spend much more time looking for Simone. And now get on with the job! That's what our poor France needs now! *Exit.*

GEORGES: She's gone: great relief all round.

MAURICE: And it had nothing at all to do with patriotism or

anything of that sort. That would have been awkward. 'The Germans are not cannibals.' Just as we were about to make a fine gesture and hand the Germans the petrol we'd been withholding from our own army, along comes the mob and starts getting all patriotic.

Through the gateway comes the Mayor. He looks pale and does not acknowledge their greetings as he goes into the hostelry.

MAYOR *turning round*: Are there sentries outside Madame Soupeau's door?

PÈRE GUSTAVE: No, Monsieur Chavez.

Exit the Mayor.

PERE GUSTAVE: He's probably here because the Germans want the village hall cleared. Unless it was Madame Soupeau who wanted it.

ROBERT: Their new order and discipline!

PÈRE GUSTAVE: About Simone, Maurice: they had to treat it as an ordinary case of arson if the insurance company was to make the damage good. Trust them not to miss a trick. *Simone is marched through the gate flanked by two German soldiers with fixed bayonets.*

GEORGES: Simone! What's happened?

SIMONE *stops, very pale*: I was down at the hall.

ROBERT: Don't be afraid. The Germans won't do anything to you.

SIMONE: Last night when they interrogated me, Robert, they said I'd be handed over to the French authorities.

GEORGES: Why did you run away?

Simone does not reply. The soldiers push her into the hostelry.

MAURICE: So the Germans don't consider the matter finished. Monsieur Henri's wrong.

Monsieur and Madame Machard come through the gate, the former in his municipal uniform.

MADAME MACHARD: Have they brought her in already? That's terrible. Monsieur Machard is quite beside himself. It's not just that our rent is due. What really upsets Monsieur Machard is the disgrace. I always knew it would end like this; all that reading of hers has turned her head. At

seven this morning there was a knock on the door, and there were the Germans outside. 'Messieurs,' I said, 'if you can't find our daughter then she must have done something desperate. Arson or no, nothing would have made her leave the hostelry. She'd have stayed for her brother's sake if for nothing else.'

Enter the Patron from the hostelry.

PATRON: It's more than I can take, Madame Machard! She's cost me 100,000 francs. How much she's cost in wear and tear to my nerves I couldn't say.

Enter Madame Soupeau from the hostelry. She holds Simone tightly by the arm and drags the reluctant girl to the store room. Behind them the Mayor and Capitaine Fetaïn. The four go into the store. The others watch in amazement.

MAYOR *standing at the door of the store room*: Machard, run across to the hall and see the evacuation goes off all right. Tell them the Germans need the space. *Exit into the store.*

MADAME MACHARD: Very good, Monsieur le Maire. *Both Machards stalk off with dignity.*

ROBERT: What do they want her in the store room for? What's going to happen to her, Monsieur Henri?

PATRON: Don't ask so many questions. We're carrying an immense responsibility. One wrong step and the hostelry is ruined.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Monsieur le Maire, I think I've demonstrated to you by the evidence of your own eyes that she left the cellar unlocked with provisions in it including 50,000 francs' worth of rare wines. How many crates have disappeared I can only guess. She deliberately deceived me by returning the key to me in your presence. *To Simone*: Simone, I was told that you yourself carried whole baskets full of food to the village hall. How much did they pay you? Where is the money?

SIMONE: I didn't take money, Madame.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Don't lie to me. And another thing: the morning when Monsieur Henri left he was threatened by the mob because a rumour was going about that the lorries

were to be taken away. Was it you who put about that rumour?

SIMONE: I told Monsieur le Maire, Madame.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Who else was in the Mayor's office when you told him? Refugees?

SIMONE: Yes, I think so.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Oh, you think so. Then when the mob arrived, what did you tell them to do with the food stores of the hostelry where you were working? *Simone does not understand*. Did you or did you not tell them to help themselves to whatever they wanted?

SIMONE: I can't remember, Madame.

MADAME SOUPEAU: So . .

MAYOR: What are you getting at, Madame?

MADAME SOUPEAU: Who were the first people to help themselves, Simone? Exactly; your parents. And they didn't do too badly.

ROBERT: That's the limit. *To Madame Soupeau*: It was you yourself pushed all those tins on to the Machards.

GEORGES *simultaneously*: It was you yourself told the Mayor to dispose of the stores as he saw fit.

MAYOR: Quite so, Madame.

MADAME SOUPEAU *ignoring the last remarks, to Simone*: You were impudent, disloyal and obstinate. That's why I dismissed you. Did you leave immediately, as I told you?

SIMONE: No, Madame.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Instead, you hung around here and then tried to get your own back for being dismissed by setting the brickworks on fire. Correct?

SIMONE *defiantly*: I did it because of the Germans.

ROBERT: Everyone in Saint-Martin knows that.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Oh, I see: because of the Germans. How did you know the Germans would discover the petrol?

SIMONE: I heard Monsieur le Capitaine talking about it to Monsieur le Maire.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Ah, so you heard we were intending to report the petrol?

SIMONE: Monsieur le Capitaine was intending to.

MADAME SOUPEAU: So your only reason for destroying the petrol was to stop us handing it over? That's just what I wanted to hear.

SIMONE *desperately*: I did it because of the enemy! There were those three tanks outside the Mairie.

MADAME SOUPEAU: And that was the enemy? Or was it somebody else? *Two nuns appear in the gateway escorted by a policeman.*

MAYOR: What is it, Jules?

POLICEMAN: These ladies are sisters of the Disciplinary Order of Saint Ursula.

CAPITAINE: I phoned the convent in your name, Chavez. *To the nuns*: This is the Machard girl, sisters.

MAYOR: How dare you?

CAPITAINE: You're surely not thinking of letting her go free, Monsieur Chavez? *Menacingly*: The least our guests can expect is that we cleanse Saint-Martin of all dangerous elements. I don't think you've fully understood our venerable Marshal's speech. France is faced with a period of danger. Insubordination is contagious, and it's up to us to nip it in the bud. One such fire in Saint-Martin is more than enough, Chavez.

MAURICE: Ah, so now it's up to us to do the Germans' dirty work for them. And it looks as if we're only too glad to.

MADAME SOUPEAU *coldly*: Of course I shall get the Public Prosecutor in Tours to authorize the girl's formal commitment. The brickworks are property of the hostelry, and Simone set fire to them from base personal motives.

GEORGES: Personal motives indeed, with Simone!

MAYOR *quite shaken*: Are you determined to destroy the child?

ROBERT *menacingly*: Who's getting her own back now?

PATRON: Don't start in again, Robert. As she's under age she'll be in the care of the Sisters, that's all.

MAURICE *horrified*: At Saint Ursula's, where they flog them!

SIMONE *screaming*: No!

MAYOR: Simone to go to that institution for the mentally

retarded? That mental torture-house, that hell? Do you realize you're condemning her to madness?

MAURICE *pointing to the figures of the brutish nuns*: Just look at them.

The nuns do not stir a muscle. Their faces remain cold and mask-like.

GEORGES: It would have been more merciful to let the Germans execute her.

SIMONE *begging for help*: That's where they finish with their heads swollen up and spit running out of their mouths, Monsieur le Maire. They chain them up!

MAYOR *firmly*: Madame Soupeau, I shall testify at the inquiry in Tours as to the true motives of this child. Be calm, Simone, everybody knows you only acted out of patriotism.

MADAME SOUPEAU *in an outburst*: Ah, so our little pétroleuse is to be a national heroine and a saint, is that the idea? France is saved: France is on fire. On my right the German tanks, on my left Simone Machard the day-labourer's daughter.

CAPITAINE: My dear Monsieur Chavez, with a past like yours the judges of the New France aren't likely to give much weight to your testimony. Besides, the road to Tours has become a little unsafe for people like you.

MAURICE *with bitterness*: You see what they're up to: defending Saint-Martin against any suggestion that there might be Frenchmen here.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Frenchmen? *Gets hold of Simone, shakes her*: Are you trying to teach us how to be patriotic? The Soupeaus have owned this hostelry for two hundred years. *To everybody*: Do you want to see a patriot? *Pointing to the Capitaine*: There's one for you. We're perfectly capable of telling you when there must be war and when peace is better. You want to do something for France? Right. *We* are France, do you get that?

CAPITAINE: You're getting too worked up, Marie. Once and for all, Monsieur le Maire, tell them to remove the Machard girl.

62 The Visions of Simone Machard

MAYOR: Me? *You seem to have taken charge here now.*

Turns away as if to leave.

SIMONE *afraid*: Don't go, Monsieur le Maire!

MAYOR *helplessly*: Keep your chin up, Simone! *Stumbles away, a broken man.*

MADAME SOUPEAU *after a silence, to the Capitaine*: Get this scandalous business finished, Honoré!

CAPITAINE *to the policeman*: I'll take the responsibility. *The policeman gets hold of Simone.*

SIMONE *in a whisper, extremely frightened*: Not to Saint Ursula's!

ROBERT: You bastard! *Tries to attack the policeman.*

MAURICE *holding him back*: Don't be a fool, Robert. There's nothing we can do for her now. They've got the police and they've got the Germans. Poor Simone, too many enemies.

MADAME SOUPEAU: Simone, fetch your things.

Simone looks around, her friends are silent and cast their glances downwards. She goes into the store room in great anguish.

MADAME SOUPEAU *calmly, half to her employees, in explanation*: The child is insubordinate and won't acknowledge any kind of authority. It is our painful duty to teach order and discipline to her.

Simone returns with a tiny suitcase, carrying her apron over her arm. She hands the apron to Madame Soupeau.

MADAME SOUPEAU: And now open your suitcase so that we can see what you are taking with you.

PATRON: Is that really necessary, Maman?

One of the nuns has already opened the suitcase. She takes out Simone's book.

SIMONE: Not the book!

The nun hands the book over to Madame Soupeau.

MADAME SOUPEAU: This is the hostelry's property.

PATRON: I gave it to her.

MADAME SOUPEAU: It didn't do her much good. *To Simone*: Simone, say goodbye to the staff.

SIMONE: Goodbye, Monsieur Georges.

GEORGES: Will you be brave, Simone?

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur Georges.

MAURICE: Keep well.

SIMONE: Yes, Maurice.

GEORGES: I shan't forget your cousin.

Simone smiles at him. She looks up at the garage roof. The light dims. Music commences, announcing the appearance of the angel. Simone looks towards the garage roof and sees him there.

THE ANGEL

France's daughter, don't be afraid.

No one can live long by fighting the Maid.

Each hand lifted to do you harm

Soon must wither away on its arm.

No matter where they may send you to

France will always go with you.

And before much time has passed

Glorious she will rise at last.

The angel disappears, full light returns. The nuns grip Simone by the arm. Simone kisses Maurice and Robert, then is led away. Everybody watches in silence.

SIMONE *at the gate, struggling desperately*: No, no! I won't go!

Help me, can't you! Not to that place! André! André!

She is dragged away.

MADAME SOUPEAU: My smelling-salts, Henri.

PATRON *gloomily*: Maurice, Robert, Georges, Père Gustave, get cracking! Don't forget it's peacetime now.

The Patron and the Capitaine take Madame Soupeau into the hostelry. Maurice and Robert leave by the gate. Pere Gustave rolls a tyre into the yard to mend it. Georges examines his bad arm. The sky begins to redden. Père Gustave points at it and shows Georges. The Patron dashes out of the hostelry.

PATRON: Maurice, Robert! Go at once and find out what's burning!

PÈRE GUSTAVE: It must be the village hall. Those refugees! They seem to have learned something.

GEORGES: They can't have got to Saint Ursula's yet. Simone will see the fire from the car.

Schweyk in the Second World War

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Translator : WILLIAM ROWLINSON

Characters

Schweyk, dog dealer in Prague · Baloun, a photographer, his friend · Anna Kopecka, landlady of the Chalice tavern · Young Prochazka, son of a butcher, her admirer · Anna, a servant girl · Kati, her friend

Brettschneider, Gestapo agent · Bullinger, lieutenant in the SS · SS-man Muller II · The Chaplain

Hitler · Himmler · Goering · Goebbels · von Bock · Minor characters

PROLOGUE IN THE HIGHER REGIONS

Martial music. Hitler, Goering, Goebbels and Himmler around a globe. All larger than life except Goebbels, who is smaller than life.

HITLER

Comrades and party members, you've seen how my iron
hand

Is holding down Germany, just as we planned.

So here's my chance to bid for world domination

Which is nothing but a small matter of tanks, stukas and
determination.

*He puts his hand on the globe, and blood slowly spreads across the
world. Goering, Goebbels and Himmler shout 'Heil!'*

First, though (this is something which even I cannot guess)

Tell me, since you're the head of my police and SS

How would you say the Little Man views me?

Not just the Germans only

But those people in Austria, Czecho-what's-its-name

(What the hell are those small countries called, on my map
they all look the same)

Do they support me and—love me indeed?

Can I count on them in a crisis, or are they—more of a
broken reed?

What's their view of me, the statesman, orator, warrior,
artist—

Just what do they think I am?

HIMMLER

The smartest.

HITLER

And are they truly generous, even to obsession

Specially with their possessions

Which I've got to have for my war, since although I find

I'm quite smart, I'm still only human.

HIMMLER

Not to my mind.

HITLER

Don't interrupt me. But oh, my poor head
Aches as I lie tossing and turning in my bed
Thinking of Europe, wondering how does the Little Man
view me?

HIMMLER

Mein Führer, they pray to you on bended knee
As to a god, all the while
Loving you as men love a mistress: the same as the Ger-
mans!

GOERING, GOEBBELS, HIMMLER:

Heil!

I

In the Chalice tavern sit Schweyk and Baloun over their morning drink. The landlady, Mrs Anna Kopecka, is serving a drunken SS man. At the bar sits young Prochazka.

MRS KOPECKA: You've had five Pilseners, and I'd rather you didn't have a sixth. You're not used to it.

SS MAN: Give me another, that's an order. You know what that means, and if you're a good girl and do as you're told I'll let you into the big secret, you won't be sorry.

MRS KOPECKA: I don't want to know. That's why you're not getting any more beer, so you don't let out your secrets and make trouble for me.

SS MAN: That's very sensible of you, just what I might have recommended myself. All personnel with knowledge of this secret will be shot. They've made an attempt on Adolf's life, in Munich. He nearly had it: skin of his teeth.

MRS KOPECKA: Shut up, you're drunk.

SCHWEYK *cordially, from the next table*: Which Adolf would that be? I know two Adolfs. One of them was behind the counter at Prusha the chemist's—he's in a concentration

camp now because he'd only sell his concentrated hydrochloric acid to Czechs—and the other's Adolf Kokoschka who picks up the dogshit and he's in a concentration camp too for saying there's no shit to beat a British bulldog's. Neither would be much loss.

SS MAN *gets up and salutes*: Heil Hitler!

SCHWEYK *likewise gets up and salutes*: Heil Hitler!

SS MAN *threateningly*: Anything wrong with that?

SCHWEYK: Present and correct, Mr SS, sir, nothing wrong at all.

MRS KOPECKA *coming with beer*: Here's your Pilsener. I don't suppose it makes any difference now. Now just you sit down nice and quiet and don't start pouring out any more of your Führer's secrets that none of us wants to hear. We don't have any politics in this place. *She points to a notice: 'Just drink your slivovitz or beer / And don't talk politics in here. Anna Kopecka'*. I'm running a business. When somebody comes and orders a beer I draw him one, but that's all.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA *when she returns to the bar*: Why won't you let people enjoy themselves, Mrs K?

MRS KOPECKA: Because the Nazis'll shut the Chalice down if I do.

SCHWEYK: If it was Hitler they had a go at it wouldn't half be a lark.

MRS KOPECKA: You be quiet too, Mr Schweyk. It's nothing to do with you.

SCHWEYK: If that was it, it could be because there's a shortage of potatoes. That's the sort of thing people won't put up with. But it's all on account of order, good order and military discipline; they've got things that organized every blessed bunch of parsley is a coupon on your ration card, that's order for you, and I've heard as how Hitler has put more things in order than you'd have thought humanly possible. Once there's no shortage you don't get order. Take me for instance, suppose I've been and sold a dachshund, there I am with a pocketful of money, notes and silver all jumbled

up, but when I'm broke there's probably nothing but a one-crown note and a ten-heller piece, and that doesn't leave you much room for disorder. When Mussolini took over in Italy the trains started running on time. They've had seven or eight goes at him so far.

MRS KOPECKA: Stop drivelling and drink your beer. If something's happened we'll all be for it.

SCHWEYK: I don't see why you have to look so miserable about it, Baloun, you'll be odd man out in Prague today.

BALOUN: It's easy enough to say food gets short in a war like this, but I haven't had a real meal since Whit Sunday last year, what with all your ration cards and two ounces of meat a week. *Indicating the SS man*: It's all right for them, look how well fed they are, I'll just go and have a quick word with him. *He goes over to the SS man*. What did you have for lunch, eh, pal, that's made you so thirsty? I hope you don't mind me asking, but I bet it was something pretty hot, goulash perhaps?

SS MAN: Mind your own business, it's a military secret, rissoles.

BALOUN: With gravy. And were there any fresh vegetables? I don't want you to say anything you shouldn't, but just supposing there was cabbage, was there plenty of butter on it? That's the important thing, you know. I remember in Przlov, before Hitler (if you'll pardon my saying so) I had a rissole at the Old Swan that was better than you get at the Ritz.

MRS KOPECKA *to Schweyk*: Can't you get Mr Baloun away from that SS man, yesterday he spent so long asking Mr Brettschneider from the Gestapo—I wonder where's he got to today—about the size of the helpings in the German army, he nearly got himself arrested as a spy.

SCHWEYK: Can't be helped. Eating's his vice.

BALOUN *to the SS man*: D'you happen to know if the Germans are taking on volunteers in Prague for the Russian campaign, and if they get the same size helpings as the German army, or is it just a rumour?

MRS KOPECKA: Mr Baloun, stop bothering that gentleman, he's off duty, and you ought to be ashamed asking such questions, and you a Czech.

BALOUN *guiltily*: I don't mean any harm—I wouldn't go asking him right out like this if I did. I know your point of view, Mrs Kopecka.

MRS KOPECKA: I don't have a point of view, I have a pub. I just expect normal decent behaviour from the customers, but you're terrible, Mr Baloun, you really are.

SS MAN: Do you want to volunteer?

BALOUN: I was only asking.

SS MAN: If you're interested I'll take you along to the recruiting office. The catering's first class, if you want to know. The Ukraine is becoming the granary of the Third Reich. When we were in Holland I sent so many food parcels home I even kept my aunt in grub, and I can't stand the sight of her. Heitler!

BALOUN *also standing up*: Heil Hitler.

SCHWEYK *who has joined them*: You mustn't say 'Heil Hitler', you must do like this gentleman, and he ought to know, say 'Heitler', that shows you're used to it and say it in your sleep at home.

MRS KOPECKA *bringing the SS man a slivovitz*: Have this one on the house.

SS MAN *embracing Baloun*: So you want to volunteer against the Bolsheviks, that's what I like to hear; you may be a Czech pig but you've got brains, I'll come along to the recruiting office with you.

MRS KOPECKA *pushing him down on to his chair*: Drink your slivovitz, it'll calm you down. *To Baloun*: I've half a mind to throw you out. You've no sense of dignity left, it comes from that unnatural gluttony of yours. Do you know that song they're all singing now? I'll sing it to you, you've only had a couple of beers, you should have your senses about you still. *She sings 'The Song of the Nazi Soldier's Wife'*:

72 Schweyk in the Second World War

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the ancient city of Prague?
From Prague it brought her some high-heeled shoes.
Just a card with news and some high-heeled shoes
That was what she got from ancient Prague.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From Warsaw on Poland's plains?
From Warsaw it brought her a fine linen blouse
To wear in the house, a superb linen blouse.
That was what came from Poland's plains.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From Oslo's well-equipped stores?
From Oslo it brought her an elegant fur.
Just the thing for her, an elegant fur!
That was what she got from Oslo's stores.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the port of Rotterdam?
From Rotterdam it brought her a hat.
And she looked good in that very Dutch-looking hat
Which was sent her from Rotterdam.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From Brussels in Belgium's fair land?
From Brussels it brought her some delicate laces.
Nothing quite replaces such delicate laces.
That was what she got from Belgium's fair land.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the lights of gay Páree?
From Páree it brought her a lovely silk dress.
To her neighbour's distress, a lovely silk dress
That was what she got from gay Páree.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
From the desert around Tobruk?
From round Tobruk it brought her a pendant.
A copper pendant that looked so resplendent
That was what it brought her from Tobruk.

What did the post bring the soldier's wife
 From the Russian steppe-lands?
 From Russia it brought her her widow's veil.
 So we end our tale with the widow's veil
 Which she got from Russia's steppes.

The SS man nods in triumph at the end of each verse, but before the last his head sinks to the table—he is out to the wide.

SCHWEYK: A very nice song. *To Baloun*: It shows you should think twice before you do anything without thinking. Don't get the idea of going off to Russia with Hitler for the sake of the extra rations, and then freezing to death, you dope.

BALOUN *deeply affected by the song, has propped his head on his elbows and begun to sob*: Mother of God, what's going to become of me the way I am about food? You lot'll have to take me in hand, otherwise I'll go to pieces completely. I can't stay a good Czech on an empty stomach.

SCHWEYK: If you swore by the Virgin Mary never to volunteer out of greed, you'd keep to it. *To Mrs Kopecka*: He's religious. Would you swear, though? No.

BALOUN: I'm not swearing on an empty stomach, it's not funny.

MRS KOPECKA: It's dreadful. You're a grown man, after all.

BALOUN: Yes, but I'm weak.

SCHWEYK: If they put a plate of pork in front of you and said 'Eat, you sinner, but swear you'll stay a good Czech', you'd swear if I know you; I mean, if they kept their hands on the plate and pulled it back straightaway if you didn't swear, you'd swear then all right.

BALOUN: That's true, but they'd have to keep their hands on it.

SCHWEYK: And you'd only keep your word if you knelt down and swore on the Bible and in front of everybody, right? *Baloun nods.*

MRS KOPECKA: It's almost worth a try. *Goes back to young Prochazka.*

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Soon as you start singing I have to hold myself back.

MRS KOPECKA *absently*: Why?

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Love.

MRS KOPECKA: How d'you know it's love and not just a passing fancy?

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: I know, Mrs K. Yesterday I wrapped up a customer's handbag for her instead of her cutlet, and got told off by my father, and all because I was thinking of you. And I get headaches first thing in the morning. It's love all right.

MRS KOPECKA: Suppose it is, the question then is how much love.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: What d'you mean by that, Mrs K?

MRS KOPECKA: I mean, how far is your love prepared to go? Perhaps only spitting distance, I know that kind of love.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Mrs K., you cut me to the quick, you really do, with accusations like that. There's no truth in them at all. My love's prepared to go to any lengths if only you'd accept it. But you won't.

MRS KOPECKA: I was wondering for instance whether it would stretch to two pounds of pickled pork.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Mrs K! How can you be so materialistic at a moment like this?

MRS KOPECKA *turning away to count bottles*: There you are. Even that's too much.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA *shaking his head*: There you go again. I just don't understand you. Ships that pass in the night, Mrs K.

BALOUN *despairingly*: It didn't only start with the war, it's an old story, this gluttony of mine. It made my sister I used to live with take her kids and go to the saint's festival at Klokota. But even Klokota didn't work. My sister brought the kids back and began to count the hens as soon as she got in. There were one or two missing. I couldn't help it, I knew they were needed for the eggs, but out I went to have a good look at them, suddenly I get this great yawning chasm

in my stomach, and an hour later I'm feeling better again and the hen's already plucked. I'm probably beyond help.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Did you mean that seriously?

MRS KOPECKA: Quite seriously.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Mrs K., when do you want the meat? Tomorrow?

MRS KOPECKA: You're sure you know what you're doing, promising it? You'd have to get it out of your father's shop without his permission and without meat coupons, and that's black-marketeering and you'll be shot if it's found out.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Don't you think I would get myself shot for you if I knew it would do me any good?

Schweyk and Baloun have been following the conversation.

SCHWEYK *appreciatively*: Now that's the way a lover ought to be. In Pilsen there was a young man in love with a widow, she wasn't so young, neither, and he hanged himself from a rafter in the barn because she happened to say that he never did anything for her; and down at the Bear a chap cut his wrist open in the gents because the barmaid had given another customer better measure, and him a family man too. A few days later a couple of fellows jumped into the Moldau off the Charles Bridge because of a woman, but that was on account of her money, she was supposed to be well off.

MRS KOPECKA: I must admit a woman doesn't hear that sort of thing every day, Mr Prochazka.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: She doesn't indeed. I'll bring it tomorrow dinnertime; is that soon enough?

MRS KOPECKA: I don't want you to get yourself into trouble, but it's in a good cause, it's not for me. You heard yourself that Mr Baloun must have a proper meal with meat, or else he gets evil ideas.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: So you don't want me to get myself into trouble. That just slipped out, sort of, didn't it? So it isn't all the same to you whether I get shot or not, now don't take it back, when you've made me happy. Mrs K.,

it's settled, you can count on that pickled pork if I have to swing for it.

MRS KOPECKA: Come in tomorrow dinnertime, Mr Baloun, I'm not promising anything, but it looks as if you'll be getting your meal.

BALOUN: If I only get one decent meal I'll get all the evil ideas out of my system. But I'm not going to start counting my chickens till I can stick a fork into 'em. I've been through too much.

SCHWEYK *pointing to the SS man*: I bet he'll have forgotten all about it when he wakes up, he's out to the wide. *Shouts in his ear*: Hurrah for Beneš! *When the SS man doesn't stir*: That's the surest sign that he's unconscious, otherwise he'd have made mincemeat of me, you see that's what they're scared of.

Brettschneider the Gestapo agent has come in.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: Who's scared?

SCHWEYK *firmly*: The SS. Won't you join us, Mr Brettschneider? A Pilsener for the gentleman, Mrs Kopecka, it's a warm day.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: And what are they scared of, in your opinion?

SCHWEYK: Of being caught off their guard and letting slip some treasonable remark, or something like that, I don't know. But perhaps you want to get on with reading your newspaper, don't let me disturb you.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: Nobody ever disturbs me if he has something interesting to say. Mrs Kopecka, you look as fresh as the flowers in May.

MRS KOPECKA *giving him his beer*: September's more like it.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA *when she is back at the bar*: If I were in your place I wouldn't let him take that sort of liberty.

BRETTSCHNEIDER *unfolding his paper*: This is a special edition. There's been an attempt to assassinate the Führer in a Munich beercellar. What do you say to that?

SCHWEYK: Did he suffer long?

BRETTSCHNEIDER: He wasn't harmed, the bomb went off too late.

SCHWEYK: Probably a cheap one. Everything's mass-produced these days, and then people are surprised when they don't get the quality stuff. Stands to reason something like that can't be made with the same loving care like when they were hand-done, I mean, doesn't it? But I must say they were a bit careless not to pick a better bomb for a job like that. There used to be a butcher in Cesky Krumlov who . . .

BRETTSCHNEIDER *interrupting*: You call it careless when the Führer is nearly killed?

SCHWEYK: A word like 'nearly' is deceptive, Mr Brettschneider. In 1938, when they sold us out at Munich, we nearly went to war, and then when we didn't we lost nearly everything. Back in the First World War Austria nearly beat Serbia and Germany nearly beat France. You can't depend on 'nearly'.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: Go on, this is interesting. You have interesting customers, Mrs Kopecka. So well up in politics.

MRS KOPECKA: One customer's the same as another. When you're in business like me, politics don't exist. And I'd be glad, Mr Brettschneider, if you wouldn't lead my regulars on to talk politics so you can put them in prison. And as for you, Mr Schweyk, you can pay for your beer and sit yourself down and talk as much rubbish as you want. But you've talked enough, Mr Schweyk, for two glasses of Pilsener.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: I have the feeling that you wouldn't think it any great loss for the Protectorate if the Führer were lying dead at this minute.

SCHWEYK: Oh, it would be a loss, you can't say it wouldn't. A dreadful one at that. You can't replace Hitler by any old halfwit. There are a lot of people grumbling about Hitler. I'm not surprised there was an attack on him.

BRETTSCHNEIDER *hopefully*: How do you mean that exactly?

SCHWEYK *cheerfully*: Great men are always unpopular with the common herd, I read that in a leading article in 'Field

and Garden'. And for why? Because the common herd don't understand them and find the whole thing unnecessary, heroism and all. The common man doesn't give a bugger for living in a great age. He wants to go down to the pub for a drink and have goulash for supper. What's a statesman to do with a lot of sods like that when he's got to get a people's name into the history books, poor bastard? The common herd's a thorn in the flesh of any great man, it's like Baloun with his appetite getting half a Frankfurter for his supper, it's no good at all. I wouldn't like to hear what the great men say about us when they all get together.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: Are you perhaps of the opinion that the German people are not solidly behind the Führer, that they complain?

MRS KOPECKA: Gentlemen, please change the subject, it's all so pointless, there's a war on, don't you know?

SCHWEYK *taking a good swig of beer*: The German people are solid behind the Führer, Mr Brettschneider, you can't say they're not. As Marshal Goering put it, 'The Führer cannot always be understood immediately, he is too great'. He should know. *Confidentially*: It's amazing how many times they've put a spoke in Hitler's wheel the moment he's got one of his ideas, even the people up top. They say last autumn he wanted to put up a building to stretch from Leipzig to Dresden, a temple in memory of Germany once it's gone under in one of his great plans he's planned down to the last detail, and as usual they shook their heads at the Ministry and said 'too great' because they can't understand something incomprehensible, the sort of thing a genius thinks up when he's got nothing better to do. Now he's landed them in a world war just by saying he wanted the town of Danzig, nothing more, it's the last thing he's set his heart on. And that's the people at the top, the educated ones, generals and directors of IG Farben, and after all they oughtn't to mind, they don't have to pay for it. The common man's even worse than they are. When he hears he's to die for something great he doesn't like the taste of

it, he picks at it and pokes it around as if it was going to stick in his throat, and I ask you, isn't that going to make a Führer sick when he's made a real effort to think up something absolutely new for them, or perhaps just having a shot at conquering the world? Anyway what's left to conquer now, there are limits to that like everything else. It's all right by me.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: So you're maintaining that the Führer wants to conquer the world? That it's not just a matter of defending Germany against her Jewish enemies and the plutocracies?

SCHWEYK: Now don't you take it like that, he doesn't mean it badly, you know. Conquering the world's all in the day's work for him, like drinking beer is for you, he gets a kick out of it so anyway he'll have a go. Down with perfidious Albion. Enough said.

BRETTSCHNEIDER *standing up*: Quite enough. Come along with me to Gestapo headquarters, we'll have something to say to you there.

MRS KOPECKA: But Mr Brettschneider, Mr Schweyk has only been making quite innocent remarks, don't get him into trouble.

SCHWEYK: I'm so innocent I'm being arrested. That's two beers and a slivovitz I've had. *To Brettschneider amicably, after paying*: Pardon me going out first, but that way you'll be able to keep an eye on me and see I don't escape.

Exit Schweyk and Brettschneider.

BALOUN: And now maybe they'll shoot him.

MRS KOPECKA: You'd better have a slivovitz, Mr Prochazka. The shock went right through you, didn't it?

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: They don't dawdle over taking you away.

Gestapo HQ in the Petschek Bank. Schweyk and Brettschneider are standing in front of SS-Lieutenant Ludwig Bullinger. An SS man in the background.

BULLINGER: This Chalice place seems to be a nice hotbed of subversive elements, eh?

BRETTSCHNEIDER *hurriedly*: Oh no, Lieutenant. The landlady, Mrs Kopecka, is a very respectable woman who has nothing to do with politics; this man Schweyk is a dangerous exception among her regulars, I've had my eye on him for quite a time. *The telephone on Bullinger's desk buzzes. He lifts the receiver and the voice at the other end can be heard.*

VOICE ON PHONE: Mobile squad to Headquarters. Kruscha, the banker, claims he couldn't have passed any opinions about the attempt on the Führer's life, having been unable to read the newspaper report as he was arrested before it appeared.

BULLINGER: Is that the Commercial Bank fellow? Ten on his backside. *To Schweyk*: Yes, I know your sort. First of all I'm going to ask you a question. If you don't know the answer, you swine, then Müller II—*pointing to the SS man*—will take you down to the cellars for some education; d'you understand? Here's the question: Do you shit thick or do you shit thin?

SCHWEYK: Beg to report, sir, I shit any way you want me to.

BULLINGER: Correct answer. However, you have expressed opinions that endanger the security of the Third Reich, you have called the Führer's defensive war a war of conquest, you have criticized the rationing system, and so on. What have you got to say to all this?

SCHWEYK: It's a lot. You can have too much of a good thing.

BULLINGER *heavily ironical*: I'm glad you're clear about that.

SCHWEYK: I'm clear about everything, stringent measures are called for, nobody'll ever get nowhere without stringent

measures, like our sergeant used to tell us in the 91st. 'If you didn't have us to make things hot for you you'd be dropping your pants and swinging from the trees.' Just what I told myself last night when they were knocking me about.

BULLINGER: Oh, you've been knocked about, have you, now fancy that.

SCHWEYK: In the cell. One of your SS gentlemen came in and gave me one over the head with his leather belt; and when I gave a bit of a groan he turns the light on and says, 'No, that's wrong, 't isn't this one'. And he gets so annoyed because he's wrong that he gives me another, on the back this time. But that's human nature: we go on making mistakes from the cradle to the grave.

BULLINGER: Hm. And you admit everything this says about your remarks? *Pointing to Brettschneider's report.*

SCHWEYK: If you want me to admit it, your eminence, I'll admit it, what have I to lose? But if you say, 'Schweyk, 'don't admit a thing', they can tear me apart and they won't get a word from me.

BULLINGER *yells*: Shut up! Take him away!

SCHWEYK *when Brettschneider has reached the door with him, raising his right arm in the Nazi salute, loudly*: Long live our Führer Adolf Hitler. Victory shall be ours!

BULLINGER *dumbfounded*: Are you a half-wit?

SCHWEYK: Beg to report, sir, yes sir. I can't help it, I've already been discharged from the army on account of half-wittedness. I have been officially certified an idiot by a medical board.

BULLINGER: Brettschneider! Didn't you see the man's a half-wit?

BRETTSCHNEIDER *injured*: Lieutenant, the observations of the man Schweyk in the Chalice resembled those of a half-wit who disguises his defeatist utterances so cleverly you can't prove anything.

BULLINGER: And you are of the opinion that what we have just heard are the observations of a man in his right mind?

BRETTSCHNEIDER: Lieutenant Bullinger, that is still my opinion. However, if for any reason you don't want him I'll take him back. I should just like to say that for us in the Criminal Investigation Department time doesn't grow on trees.

BULLINGER: Brettschneider, in my opinion you are a shit.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: Lieutenant Bullinger, I don't have to take that sort of thing from you.

BULLINGER: And I'd like you to admit it. It's not much, and it would make you feel a great deal better. Admit it, you're a shit.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: I really don't know how you can have formed such an opinion of me, Lieutenant Bullinger, in my official capacity I am conscientious down to the last detail, I . . .

VOICE ON PHONE: Mobile squad to Headquarters. The prisoner Kruscha has declared himself ready to take your brother into the bank, sir, as a partner, but continues to deny having made the remarks in question.

BULLINGER: Ten more on the backside, I need the remarks. *To Brettschneider, almost pleading:* Look, what am I asking you to do? If you admit it, it won't harm your reputation, it's a purely personal matter, you are a shit, so why not admit it? Look, I'm asking you as nicely as I can. *To Schweyk:* You try talking to him.

SCHWEYK: Beg to report, sir, that I don't want to get into an argument between you two gentlemen, but I do see what you mean, Lieutenant. But it must be a bit hard for Mr Brettschneider too, being such a good bloodhound like he is and this not really being his fault, so to speak.

BULLINGER *sadly*: So you're betraying me too, are you, you stinking hypocrite. 'And the cock crowed for the third time', like it says in the jewbible. Brettschneider, I'll wring it out of you sooner or later, but I've no time for private business just now, I've still got 97 cases to come. Throw that idiot out and once in a while try to bring me something better.

SCHWEYK *going up to him and kissing his hand*: God reward you a thousand times, sir, and if you should ever need a dog, you come to me, I deal in dogs.

BULLINGER: Concentration camp. *As Brettschneider is about to take Schweyk away again*: Stop! I want to talk to this man alone.

Exit Brettschneider, annoyed. Exit also the SS man.

VOICE ON PHONE: Mobile squad to Headquarters. The prisoner Kruscha has admitted the remarks, but only that he's not interested in the attempt on the Führer's life, not that he's pleased about it, and not that the Führer's a clown, just that he's only human after all.

BULLINGER: Five more till he's pleased about it, and till the Führer's a bloody clown. *To Schweyk, who is smiling at him amicably*: Do you know that in the camps we tear out your limbs one by one if you try to take the piss out of us, you rat?

SCHWEYK: I know that. They shoot you there before you can say Jack Robinson.

BULLINGER: So you're a dog-wallah, are you? I've seen a pure-bred pom on the promenade that caught my fancy, with a spot on one ear.

SCHWEYK *interrupting*: Beg to report, sir, I know that animal professionally. There's quite a few been after that one. It has a whiteish spot on the left ear, hasn't it? Belongs to Mr Vojta, one of the high-ups at the Ministry. It's the apple of his eye and only eats when it's begged to on bended knee, and then only if it's the best cut of veal. That proves it's racially pure. Mongrels are cleverer, but the racially pure ones are high-class and they get stolen more often. They're mostly so stupid they need two or three servants to tell 'em when to shit and when to open their mouths to eat. Like high-class people.

BULLINGER: That's enough about race, you swine. The long and the short of it is I want that pom.

SCHWEYK: You can't have him, Vojta won't sell. What about a police dog? The sort that can sniff out anything and track down criminals? There's a butcher in Vršovice got one, it

pulls his cart. Now there's a dog has missed his way in life, so to speak.

BULLINGER: I told you I want that pom.

SCHWEYK: If only Mr Vojta was a Jew you could just take it away from him and that'd be that. But he's an Aryan, got a fair beard, kind of moth-eaten.

BULLINGER *interested*: Is he a real Czech?

SCHWEYK: Not what you mean, sabotaging and grumbling about Hitler, that'd be easy. Bung him into the concentration camp like me, just because I've been misunderstood. No, he's a collaborationist—they're calling him a quisling—and that makes the pom a real problem.

BULLINGER *takes a revolver out of the drawer and begins to clean it meaningly*: I can see you don't intend to get this pom for me, you saboteur.

SCHWEYK: Beg to report, sir, that I intend to get the pom.

Didactically: There are various systems of dog-removal in use, Lieutenant. You pinch a lapdog or a terrier by cutting its lead in a crowd. You can get one of those bad-tempered dalmatians by leading a bitch on heat past it. A horsemeat sausage, nicely fried, is nearly as good. But a lot of dogs are as pampered and spoiled as the Archbishop. There was one, a smooth-haired fox terrier, pepper-and-salt he was, and I wanted him for the kennels on the other side of the Klamovka, d'you know, he wouldn't touch the sausage I gave him. Three days I followed him and then I couldn't stick it any longer, so I went straight up to the woman who used to take him for his walks and asked her what it was the dog ate made him so good-looking. That got me on the right side of her, and she said he liked chops best. So I got him a bit of fillet of veal. I thought, that's bound to be even better. And do you know, that son of a bitch wouldn't even look at it, because it was veal. He was used to pork. So I had to go and buy him a chop. I gave it him to sniff and then ran, with the dog after me. And the woman kept on shouting 'Puntik, Puntik', but it was no good, poor old Puntik. He ran after the chop as far as the corner, once he was past it I

slung a chain round his neck and next day he was the other side of the Klamovka in the kennels.—But suppose people ask you where you got the dog from, when they see the spot on his ear?

BULLINGER: I don't think anybody will ask me where I got my dog from. *Rings the bell.*

SCHWEYK: Perhaps you're right there, it wouldn't do them much good, would it?

BULLINGER: And I think you've put one over on me about being certified as an idiot; but I'm ready to turn a blind eye to that, for one thing because Brettschneider's a shit and for another because you're going to get me that dog for my wife, you crook.

SCHWEYK: Sir, permission to admit that I really was certified, though I was having a bit of a joke as well. As the landlord of a pub in Budweis said, 'I'm an epileptic but I've got cancer as well', when he wanted to keep it dark that he'd gone bankrupt. It's like the old Czech proverb says, sweaty feet seldom come singly.

VOICE ON PHONE: Mobile squad number 4 to Headquarters. The prisoner Moudra Greissler denies having overstepped the regulations relating to shops not opening before 9 a.m. on the grounds that she didn't in fact open her shop till 10 a.m.

BULLINGER: Crafty bitch. Couple of months inside for understepping the regulations. *To the SS man who has just come in, indicating Schweyk:* Free till further notice.

SCHWEYK: Before I do go, could I put in a word for a gentleman that's waiting outside among the prisoners, so he doesn't have to sit with the others, you see it isn't very nice for him, it looks a bit suspicious, him sitting on the same bench with us political prisoners. He's only here for attempted murder of a farmer from Holic.

BULLINGER *roars*: Clear out!

SCHWEYK: Very good, sir. I'll bring the pom as soon as I've got it. A very good morning!

Exit with the SS man.

INTERLUDE IN THE LOWER REGIONS

Schweyk and SS man Müller II in conversation on their way from SS headquarters to the Chalice.

SCHWEYK: If I tell Mrs Kopecka, she might do it for you.

I'm glad to hear you confirm that the Führer doesn't go for the girls, so that he can reserve his strength for higher matters of State, and that he don't ever drink alcohol. He's done what he has done stone-cold sober, you might say; it's not everyone who'd do the same. And it's lucky too that he doesn't eat anything except a few vegetables and a bit of pastry, because there's not much going, what with the war and all that, and it makes one mouth less to feed. I knew a farmer up in Moravia who'd got stomach trouble and had no appetite, and his farmhands got so scraggy that the whole village began to talk, and the farmer just went around saying 'In my house the servants eat what I eat'. Drinking's a vice, I admit, like old Budova the saddler, who meant to swindle his brother and then while he was under the influence signed over his own inheritance to the brother instead of the other way round. There are two sides to everything, and he wouldn't have to give up the girls if it were left to me, I don't ask that of anybody.

3

In the Chalice Baloun is waiting for his meal. Two other customers are playing draughts, a fat female shopkeeper is enjoying a small slivovitz, and Mrs Kopecka is knitting.

BALOUN: It's ten past twelve now, and no Prochazka. As I expected.

MRS KOPECKA: Give him a bit of time. The quickest aren't always the best. You need the right mixture of fast and

slow. Do you know the 'Song of the Gentle Breeze'? *She sings:*

Come here, my dearest, and make haste
No one dearer could I pick
But once your arm is round my waist
Don't try to be too quick.

Learn from the plums in the autumn
All golden on the trees.
They fear the whirlwind's terrible strength
And long for the gentle breeze.
You can scarcely feel that gentle breeze
It's like a whispering lullaby
Which makes the plums drop off the trees
Till on the ground they lie.

Oh, reaper, don't cut all the grass
But leave *one* blade to grow.
Don't drain the brimming wine-glass
Don't kiss me as you go.

Learn from the plums in the autumn
All golden on the trees.
They fear the whirlwind's terrible strength
And long for the gentle breeze.
You can scarcely feel that gentle breeze
It's like a whispering lullaby
Which makes the plums drop off the trees
Till on the ground they lie.

BALOUN *restless, going over to the draughts players:* You're in a good position. Would you gentlemen be interested in postcards? I work at a photographer's, and we're putting out a series of special postcards on the quiet: it's called 'German towns'.

FIRST CUSTOMER: I'm not interested in German towns.

BALOUN: You'll like our series then. *He shows them postcards furtively, as if they were pornographic pictures.* That's Cologne.

FIRST CUSTOMER: That looks dreadful. I'll have that one.
Nothing but craters

BALOUN: Fifty Hellers. But be careful showing it around. We've already had police patrols picking up people who were showing it to one another, because they thought it was something filthy, the sort of thing they like to confiscate.

FIRST CUSTOMER: That's a good caption: 'Hitler is one of the greatest architects of all time'. And a picture of Bremen in a heap of rubble.

BALOUN: I sold two dozen to a German NCO. He grinned when he looked at them, and I liked that. I told him I'd meet him in the park by Havlíček's statue, and I kept my knife open in my pocket in case he was a twister. But he was straight.

FAT WOMAN: He who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword.

MRS KOPECKA: Careful!

Enter Schweyk with SS man Müller II, a beanpole of a man.

SCHWEYK: Morning all. This gentleman with me isn't on duty. Let us have a glass of beer, Mrs Kopecka.

BALOUN: I didn't think we'd be seeing you again for a good few years. Ah well, we all make mistakes. Mr Brettschneider's usually so thorough. Last week, when you weren't here, he took the upholsterer in Cross Lane away and he hasn't come back since.

SCHWEYK: Must have been some awkward fellow who didn't crawl to them. Mr Brettschneider will think twice before he misunderstands me again. I've got protection.

FAT WOMAN: Are you the one they took away here yesterday?

SCHWEYK *proudly*: The very man. In times like these you've got to crawl. It's a matter of practice. I licked his hand. In the old days they used to put salt on prisoners' faces. Then they tied them up and set great wolfhounds on to them, and the dogs'd lick away their whole faces, I believe. Nowadays people aren't so cruel, except when they lose their tempers. Oh, but I was forgetting: this gentleman—*indicating the SS man*—wants to know what good things the future

has in store for him, Mrs Kopecka, and two beers. I've told him you've got second sight and I think it's creepy and he should have nothing to do with it.

MRS KOPECKA: You know I don't like doing it, Mr Schweyk.

SS MAN: Why don't you like to, young lady?

MRS KOPECKA: A gift like that is a responsibility. How are you to tell which way a person is going to take it, or if he's got strength enough to face up to it? Because a look into the future sometimes gets a person really on the raw, and then he blames it on me, like Czaka the brewer, I had to tell him that pretty young wife of his was going to deceive him, and right off he went and broke a valuable mirror I had on the wall there.

SCHWEYK: But she led him a dance all right. And Blaukopf the schoolmaster, we told his fortune too, same thing it was. And it always happens, when she predicts something like that. I think it's quite remarkable. The way you told Councillor Czerlek that his wife, remember, Mrs Kopecka? And she did.

SS MAN: But you've a rare gift there, you know, and you shouldn't let a thing like that go to waste.

SCHWEYK: I've told her before now she ought to make the same prediction to the entire Council, I wouldn't be surprised if it came true.

MRS KOPECKA: Don't joke about such things, Mr Schweyk. They exist, and that's all we know about them because they're supernatural.

SCHWEYK: And do you remember how you told Bulova the engineer, here, right to his face, that he'd be cut to pieces in a railway accident? His wife's already got married again. Women can stand prediction better, they've more strength of character, I'm told. Mrs Laslaček in Huss Street had such strength of character that her husband said in public: 'Anything rather than live with that woman', and went off as a voluntary worker to Germany. But the SS can stand quite a lot too, I'm told, they have to what with the concentration camps and that third-degree stuff, you've got to have nerves

of steel for that sort of thing, haven't you? *SS man nods*. So you don't have to worry about telling the gentleman's fortune, Mrs Kopecka.

MRS KOPECKA: If he'll promise to treat it as a harmless game and not take it seriously, I might just have a look at his hand.

SS MAN *suddenly hesitant*: I don't want to force you, you say you don't like doing it.

MRS KOPECKA *bringing him his beer*: Quite right. Better forget it and drink your beer.

FAT WOMAN *aside to draughts player*: Cotton's a help if you suffer from cold feet.

SCHWEYK *sits down beside Baloun*: I've some business to discuss with you, I'm going to collaborate with the Germans about a dog, and I need you.

BALOUN: I'm not in the mood.

SCHWEYK: There'll be something in it for you. If you had the cash you could take your appetite along to the black market and get something for it.

BALOUN: Young Prochazka isn't coming. Nothing but mashed potatoes again, one more disappointment like this and I'll never get over it.

SCHWEYK: Perhaps we might form a little club, six or seven chaps who'd be ready to put their two ounces of meat together, and then you'd get your meal.

BALOUN: Where would we find them, though?

SCHWEYK: That's true, it probably wouldn't work. They'd say they weren't going to give up their rations for a blot on the landscape like you, without the strength of mind to be a real Czech.

BALOUN *glumly*: Yes, you're right, they'd tell me to bugger off.

SCHWEYK: Can't you pull yourself together and think of the honour of your country whenever you feel this temptation and all you can see is a leg of veal or a nice fried pork fillet with a bit of red cabbage or gherkins maybe? *Baloun groans*. Just think of the disgrace if you gave way.

BALOUN: I'll have to try, I suppose. *Pause.* I'd sooner have red cabbage than gherkins, if it's all the same to you.

Young Prochazka enters with a briefcase.

SCHWEYK: There he is. You were looking too much on the black side, Baloun. Good morning, Mr Prochazka, how's business?

BALOUN: Good morning, Mr Prochazka, I'm glad you're here.

MRS KOPECKA *glancing at the SS man*: Will you join these gentlemen, I've something to do first. *To the SS man*: I think your hand might interest me after all, could I just have a look? *She takes hold of it.* I thought so; you have an extraordinarily interesting hand. I mean a hand that's almost irresistible for us astrologers and palmists, as interesting as that. How many other gentlemen are there in your unit?

SS MAN *with difficulty, as if having a tooth extracted*: In the detachment? Twenty. Why?

MRS KOPECKA: I thought so. It's in your hand. There are twenty gentlemen associated with you in life and death.

SS MAN: Can you really see that in my hand?

SCHWEYK *who has joined them, gaily*: You'll be surprised what else she can see there. It's just that she's careful, she won't say anything that's not absolutely certain.

MRS KOPECKA: Your hand has a lot of electricity in it, you're lucky in love, that's clear from the well-formed Mount of Venus. Women throw themselves at you, so to speak, but then they are often pleasantly surprised and wouldn't have missed the experience for worlds. You're a serious personality, and you can be tough. Your success line is fantastic.

SS MAN: What does that mean?

MRS KOPECKA: It's nothing to do with money, it's much more than that. Do you see that H, the three lines there? That means heroism, something heroic you're going to do, and very soon at that.

SS MAN: Where? Can you see where?

MRS KOPECKA: Not here. Not in your own country either. Quite a way off. There's something peculiar here that I can't quite understand. There's a secret hanging over this, so to speak, as if only you yourself and those with you at the time are going to know about it, nobody apart from that, never afterwards either.

SS MAN: How can that be?

MRS KOPECKA *sighing*: I don't know, perhaps it's on the battlefield, some forward position or something like that.

As if confused: But that's enough, isn't it? I've got to get on with my work, and it is just a game, you promised me.

SS MAN: But you can't stop now I want to know more about this secret, Mrs Kopecka.

SCHWEYK: I think so too, you ought not to keep the man guessing. *Mrs Kopecka winks at him in such a way that the SS man can see.* But perhaps you have said enough, because, well, there's a lot we're better off not knowing. Varczek the schoolmaster once looked in the encyclopaedia to see what skizziphonia meant, and afterwards they had to take him off to the Ilmenau asylum.

SS MAN: There was something more you saw in my hand.

MRS KOPECKA: No, no, that was all. Leave me alone.

SS MAN: You don't want to tell me. I saw you winking at this fellow to get him to stop, because you didn't want to speak, but I'm not having that sort of thing.

SCHWEYK: That's right, Mrs Kopecka, the SS won't have that sort of thing. I had to speak right away at Gestapo headquarters, like it or not, and straight off I admitted I wished the Führer a long life.

MRS KOPECKA: Nobody can force me to tell a customer things he won't want to hear so that he never comes back here.

SS MAN: There you are, you know something and you're not saying. You've given yourself away.

MRS KOPECKA: The second H isn't at all clear anyway: not one in a hundred would notice it.

SS MAN: What second H is that?

SCHWEYK: Get me another pint, Mrs Kopecka, it's so exciting I'm getting a thirst.

MRS KOPECKA: It's always the same, you just get yourself in trouble if you give in and do your best to read a hand. *Brings Schweyk's beer.* I didn't expect the second H, but if it's there, what can I do about it? If I tell you you'll be depressed, and it isn't as if there's anything you can do.

SS MAN: But what is it?

SCHWEYK *genially*: It must be something serious if I know Mrs Kopecka, I've never seen her like this before, and she's seen lots of things in people's hands. Can you really bear it, do you feel up to it?

SS MAN *hoarsely*: What is it?

MRS KOPECKA: And then if I tell you that the second H means a hero's death, at any rate usually, and then it depresses you? There you are, you see, it's taken you badly. I knew it. Three beers, that makes two crowns.

SS MAN *pays, shattered*: It's all a load of nonsense. Reading your hand. It can't be done.

SCHWEYK: You're quite right, look on the bright side.

SS MAN *going*: Heil Hitler.

MRS KOPECKA *calling after him*: Promise me at least you won't tell the others.

SS MAN *stops*: What others?

SCHWEYK: Your detachment. You know, the twenty of them.

SS MAN: What's it got to do with them?

MRS KOPECKA: It's just that they're associated with you in life and death. I don't want them to worry unnecessarily.

Exit SS man, cursing.

MRS KOPECKA: Do come again.

FAT WOMAN *laughing*: Lovely. You're pure gold, Mrs Kopecka.

SCHWEYK: That's that detachment dealt with. Unpack your briefcase, Mr Prochazka. Baloun won't be able to stand it much longer.

MRS KOPECKA: Yes, bring it out, Rudolf. It's good of you to have brought it.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA *feebly*: I haven't got it. Seeing them take Mr Schweyk away gave me such a shock I kept seeing it all night long, good morning Mr Schweyk, so you're back, I didn't dare to risk it, I'm afraid. I feel dreadful, Mrs Kopecka, letting you down in front of the customers, but it's stronger than I am. *Desperately*: Please say something, anything's better than this silence.

BALOUN: Nothing.

MRS KOPECKA: Well, so you haven't got it. But before, when you came in, when I gave you a sign that I'd have to get rid of the SS man first, you nodded to me as if you'd got it.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: I didn't dare . .

MRS KOPECKA: You needn't say any more. I've got your mark. You've failed the test as a man and as a Czech. Get out, you coward, and never darken my doors again.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: It's all I deserve. *Slinks away*.

SCHWEYK *after a pause*: Talking of palmistry, Krisch the barber at Mnišek—you know Mnišek?—was telling people's fortunes from their hands at the parish fair, and got himself drunk on the proceeds, and a young farmer took him home with him so he could tell his fortune when he'd sobered up, and before he fell asleep the barber asked this young fellow 'What are you called? Get my notebook out of my inside pocket, will you? So you're called Kunert. Right, come back in a quarter of an hour and I'll leave you a bit of paper with the name of your future wife on it'. And with that old Krisch began to snore. But then he woke up again and scribbled something in his notebook. He tore it out and threw it on the floor and put his finger to his lips and said 'Not now, in a quarter of an hour. It'll be best if you look for the bit of paper blindfold'. And all there was on the paper was 'The name of your future wife will be Mrs Kunert'.

BALOUN: He's a criminal, that Prochazka.

MRS KOPECKA *angrily*: Don't talk nonsense. The criminals are the Nazis, threatening and torturing people for so long

that they go against their real nature. *Looking through the window*: This one coming now, he's a criminal, not Rudolf Prochazka; he's just weak.

FAT WOMAN: I tell you, we're guilty as well. We might do a bit more than drink slivovitz and make jokes.

SCHWEYK: Don't ask too much of yourself. It's something to be still alive nowadays. And you're kept so busy keeping alive that there's no time for anything else.

Enter Brettschneider and the SS man of the previous day.

SCHWEYK *gaily*: A very good morning to you, Mr Brettschneider. Will you have a beer with me? I'm working for the SS now, so it can't do me any harm.

BALOUN *viciously*: Out!

BRETTSCHNEIDER: How exactly do you mean that?

SCHWEYK: We've been talking of food, and Mr Baloun has just remembered the chorus of a popular song we've been trying to call to mind. It's a song they usually sing at fairs, about the proper way to deal with radishes, around Mnišek they have those big black radishes, you'll have heard about them, they're famous. I'd be glad if you'd sing that song for Mr Brettschneider, Baloun, it would cheer him up. He has a fine voice, he even sings in the church choir.

BALOUN *scowling*: I'll sing it. The subject is radishes.

Baloun sings the 'Song of the Black Radish'. All through the song Brettschneider, with everyone looking at him, is undecided whether to intervene or not. Each time he sits down again.

It's always best to pick a nice fat black one
And gaily tell him, 'Oy, mate, you get out'.
But wear your gloves when you attack one
Bang on the snout.
That snout's so dirty 'cause the bugger lives in dung.
Filthy lout. Should be slung
Out.

You won't be asked to pay inflated prices
You get the sod dirt cheap all over town.

96 Schweyk in the Second World War

And once you've got him shredded into slices
Salt him down.

Salt in his wounds! He's asked for everything he gets.

Salt him down! Till he sweats.

Salt him down!

INTERLUDE IN THE HIGHER REGIONS

Hitler and Marshal Goering in front of a model tank. Both are larger than life. Martial music.

HITLER

My good old Goering, now three hard-fought years have
passed

And it looks as if my war's won at last

Though it's hard to keep it from spreading to other areas

Unless I can have more tanks, guns and aircraft carriers.

That means people have got to stop sitting around and
flopping

And start sweating blood for my war instead until they're
dropping.

So answer me if you can:

What of the European *Little Man*?

D'you think he'll want to work for my war?

GOERING

Mein Führer, I'd say that is something of which we're quite
sure:

The Little Man in Europe will sweat out his guts no less
cheerfully

Than the Little Man in Germany.

That's a job for my Labour Front.

HITLER

Splendid, so you've got a special outfit. That's an excellent
stunt.

4

A bench in the gardens by the Moldau. Evening. A couple enter, stand looking upstage towards the river with their arms round each other, saunter on. Enter Schweyk and Baloun. They look back.

SCHWEYK: Old Vojta treats his servant girls pretty badly; she's the third he's had since Candlemas, and already wanting to leave, I'm told, because their neighbours are on at her for working for a quisling. So it doesn't matter to her if she comes home without the dog, so long as it's not her fault. You sit down there first, she mightn't sit down if nobody else is sitting there.

BALOUN: Shouldn't I be holding the sausage?

SCHWEYK: So you can eat it yourself? Just sit down.

Baloun sits down on the bench. Two servant girls enter, Anna and Kati, the former with a pomeranian on a lead.

SCHWEYK: Excuse me, miss, can you tell me how I get to Palacky Street?

KATI *distrustful*: It's just across Havliček Square. Come on, Anna.

SCHWEYK: Excuse me, but can you tell me where the square is? I'm a stranger here.

ANNA: I'm a stranger too. Go on, Kati, tell the gentleman.

SCHWEYK: Well now, isn't it funny that you should be a stranger too. I'd never have known you weren't a Prague girl, and with such a nice little dog. Where do you come from?

ANNA: I'm from Protivin.

SCHWEYK: Then we're almost neighbours, I'm from Budweis.

KATI *trying to draw her away*: Do come on, Anna.

ANNA: Coming. Then you must know Pejchara, the butcher with the shop on the ring road in Budweis.

SCHWEYK: Do I know him? He's my brother. He's very well liked there, you know, a nice chap and very obliging, and always the best meat and good measure.

ANNA: Yes.

Pause. Kati waits ironically.

SCHWEYK: What a coincidence we should meet as far away as this. Have you a few minutes to spare? We must tell each other the news from Budweis—there's a bench over there with a nice view—that's the Moldau.

KATI: Really? *With pointed irony*: I'd never have known.

ANNA: There's somebody sitting there already.

SCHWEYK: A gentleman enjoying the view. You should keep an eye on that dog of yours.

ANNA: Why?

SCHWEYK: Don't say I told you, but the Germans are keen on dogs, astonishingly keen, specially the SS, a dog like that's gone quick as a wink, they ship 'em back home, me for instance, only the other day I met an SS lieutenant called Bullinger who was looking for a pom for his wife back in Cologne.

KATI: So you knock around with SS lieutenants and people like that, do you? Come on, Anna, that really is enough.

SCHWEYK: I spoke to him while I was in custody for expressing opinions that endangered the security of the Third Reich.

KATI: Is that true? Then I take back what I said. We've got a few minutes to spare, Anna.

She leads the way to the bench. The three of them sit down next to Baloun.

KATI: What opinions?

SCHWEYK *indicates that he cannot talk about it because of the stranger, and adopts an especially innocent tone*: How do you like it in Prague?

ANNA: All right, but you can't trust the men here.

SCHWEYK: That's only too true, I'm glad you realize it. Country people are a decenter lot, wouldn't you say? *To Baloun*: Nice view here, sir, don't you think?

BALOUN: Not bad.

SCHWEYK: Sort of view would appeal to a photographer.

BALOUN: As a background.

SCHWEYK: A photographer could make something really nice out of it.

BALOUN: I am a photographer. We've got the Moldau painted on a screen in the studio where I work, only a bit tarted up. We use it for the Germans, mostly SS, who want a picture of themselves in front of it to send home when they've been posted and won't be coming back. It isn't the Moldau, though, just any old river.

The girls laugh approvingly.

SCHWEYK: That's very interesting. Couldn't you maybe take a snap of the young ladies—needn't be a full-length shot, just a bust—beg pardon, that's the technical term.

BALOUN: I could indeed.

ANNA: That would be nice. But not in front of that Moldau of yours, eh?

Plenty of laughter greets this, then a pause.

SCHWEYK: D'you know this one? A Czech standing on the Charles Bridge hears a German in the Moldau shouting for help. So he leans over the parapet and yells 'Shut up down there, you ought to have learnt swimming instead of German'.

The girls laugh.

SCHWEYK: Yes, that's the Moldau. There's a lot of immorality goes on in the park now it's wartime, I can tell you.

KATI: There was in peacetime.

BALOUN: And at Whitsun.

SCHWEYK: Out of doors they keep at it till All Saints' Day.

KATI: And nothing goes on indoors?

BALOUN: Plenty there too.

ANNA: And at the pictures.

They all laugh a lot again.

SCHWEYK: Yes, the Moldau. D'you know the old song 'Henry slept beside his newly-wedded'? They sing it a lot in Moravia.

ANNA: Doesn't it go on 'Heiress to a castle on the Rhine'?

SCHWEYK: Yes, that's the one. *To Baloun:* Have you got

something in your eye? Don't rub it. Could you perhaps see to it, Miss, the corner of a handkerchief's the best.

ANNA *to Schweyk*: Would you hold the dog? You've got to be careful in Prague. There's a lot of soot blows around.

SCHWEYK *ties the dog loosely to the lamppost near the bench*: Excuse me, but I really must get down to Palacky Street. Business you know. I should like to have heard you sing the song, but I haven't the time, I'm afraid. Good-bye. *Exit*.

KATI *as Anna fishes around in Baloun's eye with a handkerchief*: He's in a hurry.

ANNA: I can't find anything.

BALOUN: It's better, I think. What's this song you were talking about?

ANNA: Shall we sing it for you? We really must go then, though. Quiet, Lux. I'd be glad to see the back of both you and your master. *To Baloun*: He's too well in with the Germans for me. Right, I'll begin.

The two girls sing 'Henry slept beside his newly-wedded' with considerable feeling. Meanwhile from behind a bush Schweyk attracts the dog with a tiny sausage, and makes off with it.*

BALOUN *after the song*: You sang that beautifully.

KATI: And now we've really got to go. Mother of God, where's the dog?

ANNA: Heavens above, now the dog's gone. And he never runs away. What will Mr Vojta say?

BALOUN: He'll ring up his friends the Germans, that's all. Don't get upset, it's not your fault, that gentleman can't have tied him tight enough. I thought I caught a glimpse of something moving away while you were singing.

KATI: Quick, we'll go to the police and see if it's been found.

BALOUN: Why don't you come to the halice one Saturday night. It's number 7, Huss Street.

They nod to Baloun and go out quickly. Baloun returns to his contemplation of the view. The previous couple come back, but with their arms no longer round each other. Then Schweyk arrives with the pomeranian on a lead.

* The text of this song is on p. 139.

SCHWEYK: It's a real quisling's dog, bites when you're not looking. Gave me a terrible time on the way. When I was crossing the railway he lay down on the lines and wouldn't move. Perhaps he wanted to commit suicide, the silly sod. Let's get a move on.

BALOUN: Did he go for that horse sausage? I thought he was only supposed to eat veal.

SCHWEYK: War's no picnic, not even for them with pedigrees. But Bullinger's not getting this one till I see the colour of his money, or else he'll swindle me. Us collaborators have to be paid.

A tall, sinister man has appeared upstage and has been watching the two of them. He now approaches.

MAN: Good evening, gentlemen. Taking a stroll?

SCHWEYK: Yes, and what's it got to do with you?

MAN: Perhaps you'd be kind enough to show me your identification papers. *He displays an official badge.*

SCHWEYK: I haven't got my papers with me, have you?

BALOUN *shakes his head*: We've not done anything.

MAN: I didn't stop you because you'd done something, but because you seemed to me to be doing nothing. I'm from the Department of Voluntary War Work.

SCHWEYK: Are you one of those gentlemen who have to hang around outside cinemas and in pubs to dig up people for the factories?

MAN: What's your job?

SCHWEYK: I run a dog business.

MAN: Have you got a certificate to say you're employed on essential war work?

SCHWEYK: No, your honour, I haven't. But it is essential war work; even in wartime a chap wants a dog, so that he can have a friend at his side when the bad times come, eh, pom? People keep a lot calmer when they're being bombed and shelled if they've got a dog looking up at them like he was saying 'Is that really necessary?' And this gentleman is a photographer, and that's even more essential if anything, because he takes photos of soldiers so that the folks back

home can at least have pictures of their boys, and that's better than nothing, you must admit.

MAN: I think I'd better take you along to headquarters, and I advise you to cut out all this nonsense when you get there,

BALOUN: But we pinched the dog under higher orders, can't you explain to him?

SCHWEYK: There's nothing to explain. This fellow's under higher orders too.

They leave with him.

SCHWEYK: So your job is pinching men, is it?

5

Lunch time in the Prague goods yards. On the rails sit Schweyk and Baloun, now shunters in the service of Hitler, guarded by a German soldier armed to the teeth.

BALOUN: I'd like to know what's happened to Mrs Kopecka with our dinner. I hope she's not got into trouble.

SERVICE CORPS LIEUTENANT *passing, to Soldier*: Guard! If anyone asks which is the waggon for Bavaria, remember it's that one there, number 4268.

SOLDIER *at attention*: Yessir.

SCHWEYK: It's all organization with the Germans. They've got things better organized than anyone ever before. Hitler presses a button and bang goes—China, let's say. They've got the Pope in Rome on their list, with all he's said about 'em, he's had it. And even lower down the scale, take an SS commander, he's only got to press the button and there's the urn with your ashes being handed to your widow. We can thank our stars we're here with a well-armed guard to stop us sabotaging something and getting shot.

Mrs Kopecka enters with enamel dishes. The soldier studies her pass absently.

BALOUN: What is it?

MRS KOPECKA: Carrot cutlet and potato sausages. *As the two*

of them eat the food with their plates on their knees, softly: That dog must go. It's become a political matter now. Don't gobble, Mr Baloun, you'll get ulcers.

BALOUN: Not from potatoes I shan't, from a nice fat chicken maybe.

MRS KOPECKA: It said in the paper the disappearance of Councillor Vojta's dog was an act of vengeance by a section of the population against a pro-German official. Now they're looking for it so they can smoke out the nest of subversive elements. It must be got out of the Chalice, and today.

SCHWEYK: It isn't very convenient at the moment. Only yesterday I sent Lieutenant Bullinger an express letter saying I wanted 200 crowns for the dog and I wouldn't let him have it till I got the money.

MRS KOPECKA: Mr Schweyk, you're taking your life in your hands writing letters like that.

SCHWEYK: I don't think so, Mrs Kopecka. Bullinger's a swine, but he'll find it quite natural that business is business, otherwise nothing's sacred, and he needs the dog for his wife in Cologne, I'm told. A collaborationist doesn't work for nothing, just the opposite, he even gets paid more these days because his own people despise him, I have to be compensated for that, why else do it?

MRS KOPECKA: But you can't do business while you're stuck here.

SCHWEYK *amiably*: I'm not wasting my time here. I've already cost them one waggonload of soap. It isn't difficult. In Austria once, when they banned strikes, the railwaymen stopped traffic for eight hours just by carrying out all the safety regulations to the letter.

MRS KOPECKA *energetically*: All the same, that dog must be got out of the Chalice, Mr Schweyk. I have a certain amount of protection from Mr Brettschneider, who's still hoping to start something with me, but that won't go far. *Schweyk is only half listening to her, as two German soldiers have been taking a great steaming cooking-pot past and serving goulash*

into the guard's aluminium plate. Baloun, who has long since finished eating, has stood up, and as if in a trance is following the trail of the food, sniffing.

SCHWEYK: I'll come and get him. Just look at that!

GERMAN SOLDIER *shouting sharply at Baloun*: Halt!

MRS KOPECKA *to Baloun, as he comes back discontented and upset*:

Do pull yourself together, Mr Baloun.

SCHWEYK: In Budweis there was a doctor who had diabetes so bad that all he was allowed to eat was a tiny bit of rice pudding, and him a great barrel of a man. He couldn't keep it up and went on eating the leftovers in the pantry on the quiet. He knew just what he was doing and after a bit he decided it was all too silly, so he told his housekeeper to cook him a seven-course meal, pudding and all, and she cried so much she could hardly dish it up, and he put a funeral march on the gramophone to go with it and that was the end of him. It'll be just the same with you, Baloun, you'll finish up under a Russian tank.

BALOUN *still shivering from top to toe*: They're handing out goulash.

MRS KOPECKA: I've got to go. *She picks up the dishes and leaves.*

BALOUN: I only want to have a look. *To the soldier, who is eating*: Are the helpings always as big as that in the army, soldier? That's a nice big one you've got. But maybe it's only when you're on guard, so you can keep wide awake, or else we might clear off, eh? Could I just have a sniff maybe?

The soldier sits eating, but between bites he moves his lips.

SCHWEYK: Don't bother him with questions. Can't you see he's got to learn the number by heart, or he'll be sending the wrong waggon off to Bavaria, you idiot? *To the soldier*: You're right to make sure you know it, anything can happen. They've stopped putting the destinations on the waggons now because saboteurs used to rub them off and write the wrong address on. What was that number: 4268, wasn't it? Look, you don't need to keep saying it under

your breath for half an hour, let me tell you what to do, I got this tip from an official in the department where they issue licences to traders, he was explaining it to a pedlar who couldn't remember his number. I'll show you how it works for yours and you'll see how easy it is. 4268. The first figure is a 4, the second a 2. So the first thing to remember is 42. That's twice two, or starting the other way round, it's 4 divided by 2, and there you've got your 4 and your 2 next to each other again. Don't get alarmed now; what's twice 4? 8, isn't it? Right, fix in your memory that the 8 in 4268 is the last in the series, and the only other thing you need remember is that the first figure is a 4, the second a 2, the fourth an 8, and then you just need some good way of remembering the 6 that comes before the 8. It's dead easy. The first figure is a 4, the second a 2, 4 and 2 is 6. So you're quite clear that the second number from the end is a 6, and now, as the man at the licensing office would have said, the order of the figures is permanently fixed in our memory. You can get the same result even easier. He explained this method to the pedlar too. I'll do it again for you with your number.

The soldier has been listening wide-eyed. His lips have stopped moving.

SCHWEYK: 8 less 2 is 6. So there's your 6. 6 less 2 is 4, so there's your 4. 8 and the 2 in between gives you 4-2-6-8. It's easy enough to do it another way again, using multiplication and division. This is how you get the answer then: he said you must remember that twice 42 is 84. There are 12 months in a year. So you take 12 from 84, that leaves us with 72; take off another 12 months, that's 60. So that's our 6 fixed, and we cancel the nought. Now we've got 42-6-84. Since we've cancelled the nought we also cancel the 4 at the end, and there we've got our number complete again. You can do it with division too, like this. What was our number, by the way?

VOICE OFF: Guard, what's the number of the waggon for Bavaria?

SOLDIER: What is it?

SCHWEYK: Right, just a moment, I'll work it out by the system with the months. There are 12 of them, aren't there —agreed?

SOLDIER *desperately*: Tell me the number.

VOICE: Guard! Are you asleep?

SOLDIER *shouts*: I've forgotten it. For-got-ten! *To Schweyk*: To hell with you!

VOICE *roughly*: It's got to go with the 12.50 to Passau.

SECOND VOICE *further off*: Let's take this one then, I think that's it.

BALOUN *satisfied, indicating the soldier, who is looking upstage appalled*: He wouldn't let me sniff his goulash.

SCHWEYK: For all I know a waggonload of machine-guns is on its way to Bavaria now. *Philosophically*: But by that time perhaps what they'll need most in Stalingrad will be combine-harvesters and it'll be Bavaria's turn to want machine-guns. Who can tell?

6

Saturday night at the Chalice. Among the customers Baloun, Anna, Kati, Young Prochazka and two SS men on their own. Dancing to the music of a player piano.

KATI *to Baloun*: I told Mr Brettschneider at the inquiry that I'd already heard the SS were after the dog. I didn't mention your name, only your friend Mr Schweyk's. And I didn't say anything about Mr Schweyk pretending he didn't know you so he could get into conversation with us. Was that all right?

BALOUN: Anything's all right as far as I am concerned. I won't be with you much longer. They'll not half be surprised to see me.

ANNA: Don't be so gloomy, Mr Baloun, it doesn't help. And

that SS man over there will ask me to dance again if I go on sitting around like this. You ask me.

Baloun is about to get up when Mrs Kopecka comes downstage and claps her hands.

MRS KOPECKA: Ladies and gentlemen, it's coming up to half past eight, time for the Beseda—*partly to the SS men*—our traditional dance we dance among ourselves, it mayn't please everyone but we like it. The music's on the house. *Mrs Kopecka puts a coin in the piano and the company dance the Beseda, stamping very loudly. Baloun and Anna join in. The aim of the dance is to get rid of the SS men, and so their table is barged into, etc.*

BALOUN *sings*:

When the midnight churchbells ring
Feel your oats and have a fling.
Yupp-i-diddle, yupp-i-day
Girls come out to play.

THE OTHERS *join in*:

Let you pinch their rosy cheeks
Most of them have four cheeks each
Yupp-i-diddle, yupp-i-day
Girls come out to play.

The SS men stand up swearing, and push their way out. After the dance Mrs Kopecka comes in again from the back room and goes on rinsing her glasses. Kati brings the first customer of scene 3 over to her table.

FIRST CUSTOMER: Folk dancing's a new idea at the Chalice. Very popular it is; the regulars know Mrs Kopecka listens to Radio Moscow while it's going on.

BALOUN: I shan't be dancing with you much longer. Where I'm going they don't dance the Beseda.

ANNA: I'm told we were very rash to go into the Moldau gardens. It's dangerous because of the German deserters who set on you.

FIRST CUSTOMER: They only go for men. They're after civilian clothes. There's German uniforms being found every morning now in Stromovka Park.

KATI: And anybody loses his suit that way doesn't find it so easy to get a new one. They say the Clothes Rationing Bureau have stopped clothes and hats being made out of paper now. Because of the paper shortage.

FIRST CUSTOMER: Clothes Rationing Bureau! The Germans just love bureaus, they spring up like mushrooms all over the place. It's a matter of making jobs for themselves so they aren't called up. They'd rather torment us Czechs with milk rationing and food rationing and paper rationing and all the rest. Scrimshankers.

BALOUN: They'll finish me off. I can see only one future for me.

ANNA: What on earth are you talking about?

BALOUN: You'll find out soon enough, Anna. I suppose you know that song 'Myriad doors and gateways' about the painter who died young. Would you sing it for me, it's my case exactly.

ANNA *sings*:

Myriad doors and gateways he could paint you straight-
ways

Loved his decorating, kept no lady waiting.

You won't see him around, he's six feet underground.

—You mean that one?

BALOUN: That's it.

ANNA: But heavens, you're not going to make away with yourself, Mr Baloun?

BALOUN: What I'm going to do to myself will fill you with horror, Anna. I'm not taking my life but something much worse.

Enter Schweyk with a parcel under his arm.

SCHWEYK *to Baloun*: Here I am with your goulash meat. You needn't thank me, because I'm having that camp bed in your kitchen in exchange.

BALOUN: Show me, is it beef?

SCHWEYK *energetically*: Take your paws off it. It's not to be unpacked here. Good evening, ladies, are you here too?

ANNA: Good evening. We know all about it.

SCHWEYK *pulling Baloun into a corner*: What have you been letting out now?

BALOUN: Only that we know each other and it was a trick pretending we didn't. I didn't know anything to let out. You're welcome to my camp bed. You've saved a friend from the edge of the precipice, just let me sniff it through the paper. Mrs Mahler from across the road offered me 20 crowns for it, but I'm not interested. Where did you get this?

SCHWEYK: On the black market, from a midwife who got it from the country. About 1930 she delivered a farmer's child with a little bone in its mouth, and she burst into tears and said 'That means we'll all go hungry', that's what she predicted long before the Germans were here, and every year the farmer's wife sends her a food parcel so she won't go hungry, but this year the midwife needs the money to pay her taxes.

BALOUN: Let's hope Mrs Kopecka has some real paprika.

MRS KOPECKA *who has joined them*: Go back to your table, in half an hour I'll call you into the kitchen. And in the meantime act as if nothing was happening. *To Schweyk, when Baloun has gone back to his table*: What sort of meat is this?

SCHWEYK *reproachfully*: Mrs Kopecka, I'm surprised at you. *Mrs Kopecka takes the parcel out of his hand and looks into it carefully.*

SCHWEYK *at the sight of Baloun talking to the girls with huge excited gestures*: Baloun is too worked up for my liking. Put plenty of paprika in it, so it tastes like beef. It's horse. *She fixes him sternly.* All right, it's Mr Vojta's pom. I had to do it, because the Chalice'll get a bad name if one of your regulars is so hungry he has to join the Germans.

CUSTOMER AT THE BAR: Service, please!

Mrs Kopecka gives Schweyk the parcel to hold, in order to serve the customer quickly. At this moment a heavy vehicle is heard drawing up and then SS men enter, headed by Lieutenant Bullinger.

BULLINGER *to Schweyk*: Your landlady was right when she said you'd be in the pub. *To the SS men*: Clear a space! To

*Schweyk, while the SS men push the other customers back:
Where've you got that dog, you swine?*

SCHWEYK: Beg to report, sir, it said in the newspaper the dog had been stolen. Didn't you see it?

BULLINGER: Ah, taking the mickey, are you?

SCHWEYK: Beg to report sir, no sir. I only wanted to suggest you read the papers, otherwise you might miss something and then not be able to take drastic measures about it.

BULLINGER: I don't know why I stand here listening to you it's sheer perversity on my part, I probably just want to see how far a character like you will go before he's hanged.

SCHWEYK: Yes, lieutenant, that's why, and because you want the dog.

BULLINGER: You admit you wrote me a letter asking 200 crowns for the dog?

SCHWEYK: Lieutenant Bullinger, sir, I admit that I wanted the 200 crowns, because I should have had expenses if the dog hadn't been stolen.

BULLINGER: We'll have something more to say about that at Gestapo headquarters. *To the SS men:* Search the whole place for a pomeranian dog. *Exit an SS man.*

Off stage furniture can be heard being overturned, things being broken, etc. Schweyk waits in philosophic calm, his parcel under his arm.

SCHWEYK *suddenly*: They keep quite a good slivovitz here too.

An SS man bumps against a little man as he goes past. As the latter steps back he treads on a woman's foot and says 'I beg your pardon', whereupon the SS man turns round, knocks him down with his truncheon and, together with one of the other SS men, drags him off at a nod from Bullinger. Then the SS man who has been searching comes back with Mrs Kopecka.

SS MAN: House searched, sir. No dog found.

BULLINGER *to Mrs Kopecka*: This is a nice little hornet's nest of subversive activity you're passing off as a pub. But I shall smoke it out.

SCHWEYK: Yes indeed sir, Heil Hitler. Otherwise we might get too big for our boots and say to hell with the regula-

tions. Mrs Kopecka, you must run your pub in such a way that everything is as transparent and clear as the water of a running spring, like Chaplain Vejvoda said when he . . .

BULLINGER: Silence, swine. I'm thinking of taking you along with me and closing your establishment down, Mrs Koscheppa!

BRETTSCHNEIDER *who has appeared at the door*: Lieutenant Bullinger, may I have a private word with you?

BULLINGER: I don't know what we could have to discuss. You know what I think you are.

BRETTSCHNEIDER: It concerns new information with regard to the whereabouts of the Vojta dog, which we have received at Gestapo headquarters and which should interest you, Lieutenant Bullinger.

The two men go into a corner and begin to gesticulate wildly. Brettschneider seems to imply that Bullinger has the dog, he seems to say 'me?' and to get angry, etc. Mrs Kopecka has returned indifferently to rinsing her glasses. Schweyk stands there in amiable unconcern. Then unfortunately, Baloun starts a successful attempt to get his parcel. At a sign from him a customer takes it from Schweyk and passes it on. It reaches Baloun, who turns it round in his hands recklessly. An SS man has been watching the parcel's peregrinations with some interest.

SS MAN: Hey, what's going on there?

In a couple of strides he reaches Baloun and takes the parcel away from him.

SS MAN *handing the parcel to Bullinger*: Sir, this parcel was just being smuggled to one of the customers, that man there, sir.

BULLINGER *opens the parcel*: Meat. Owner step forward.

SS MAN *to Baloun*: You there! You were opening the parcel.

BALOUN *troubled*: It was pushed into my hands. It don't belong to me.

BULLINGER: So it don't belong to you, don't it? Ownerless meat, apparently. *Suddenly shouting*: Then why were you opening it?

SCHWEYK *when Baloun can find no answer to this*: Beg to report,

Lieutenant Bullinger, that this stupid fellow must be innocent because he'd never have looked inside the parcel if it had been his as he'd already have known what was in it.

BULLINGER *to Baloun*: Where did you get it from?

SS MAN *when Baloun again does not reply*: I first noticed that man—*pointing to the customer who took the parcel from Schweyk*—passing the parcel along.

BULLINGER: Where did you get it?

CUSTOMER *unhappily*: It was pushed into my hands, I don't know who did it.

BULLINGER: This pub seems to be a branch of the black market. *To Brettschneider*: You were just sticking your neck out on the landlady's behalf, if I'm not mistaken, Mr Brettschneider.

MRS KOPECKA *steps forward*: Gentlemen, there are no black market deals going on at the Chalice.

BULLINGER: No? *He slaps her across the face*, I'll show you whether there are, you dirty Czech bitch.

BRETTSCHNEIDER *excitedly*: I must ask you not to judge Mrs Kopecka without a hearing. I know her to be quite uninterested in politics.

MRS KOPECKA *very pale*: I won't stand for being hit.

BULLINGER: What's this? Contradicting me? *Slaps her again*. Take her away!

Since Mrs Kopecka now tries to attack Bullinger the SS man hits her over the head.

BRETTSCHNEIDER *bending over Mrs Kopecka as she lies on the ground*: You'll have to answer for that, Bullinger. You won't manage to distract attention from the Vojta dog that way.

SCHWEYK *stepping forward*: Beg to report, I can explain everything. The parcel doesn't belong to anybody here. I know, because I put it down myself.

BULLINGER: So it was you, was it?

SCHWEYK: It belonged to a man who gave it me to keep an eye on while he went to the gents, at least that's what he said. He was about medium height with a fair bea

BULLINGER *astonished at this unlikely story*: Tell me, are you soft in the head?

SCHWEYK *looking at him straight and seriously in the eye*: I already told you I was. I've been officially declared an idiot by a board. That's why I was kicked out of voluntary war work too.

BULLINGER: But you're bright enough for the black market, is that it? When I get you back to headquarters you'll find a hundred certificates are bugger all use to you.

SCHWEYK *submissively*: Beg to report, sir, that I quite realize they'll be bugger all use to me, because I've been landing in this sort of a mess ever since I was a kid, when all the time I've meant well and tried to do whatever they wanted. Like the time in Lubova when I was going to help the caretaker's wife at the school there to hang out her washing, if you'd come out into the passage I could tell you what happened. I got into the black market same way as Pontius Pilate got in the creed, a bit of an accident you might say.

BULLINGER *staring at him*: I just don't know why I listen to you at all, and this is the second time too. Maybe because I've never seen as big a crook before and the sight hypnotizes me.

SCHWEYK: I suppose it's like if you suddenly saw a lion in Charles Street, where you don't usually come across them, or like the time in Chotebor when the postman caught his wife with the caretaker and stabbed her. He went straight to the police to give himself up, and when they asked him what he did afterwards he said that as he came out of the house he saw a man going round the corner stark naked, so they let him go, thinking he was soft in the head, but two months later it came out that just at that time a lunatic had escaped from the asylum there without any clothes on. They didn't believe the postman even though it was the truth.

BULLINGER *astonished*: I keep on listening to you. I can't drag myself away. I know what you're thinking—that the Third Reich will last a year perhaps, or maybe ten years—

but let me tell you we're likely to be here for 10,000 years, put that in your pipe and smoke it.

SCHWEYK: You've come to stay then, as the sexton said when the landlady of the Swan married him and dropped her teeth in a tumbler for the night.

BULLINGER: Do you piss white or do you piss yellow?

SCHWEYK *amiably*: Beg to report, I piss yellowy-white, lieutenant, sir.

BULLINGER: And now you're coming along with me, even if certain people—*pointing to Brettschneider*—are ready to stick out their neck for you so far they catch it in a noose.

SCHWEYK: Very good, sir. Order must prevail. The black market's a bad thing and won't stop till there's nothing left to sell. Then we'll have order, right?

BULLINGER: And we shall get the dog too.

Exit Bullinger with the parcel under his arm. The SS men seize Schweyk and lead him off.

SCHWEYK *good-naturedly, on leaving*: I only hope you won't be disappointed when you do. A lot of my customers, when they get a dog they've been particularly keen on and have turned the place upside down for, they don't much care for it any more.

BRETTSCHNEIDER *to Mrs Kopecka, who has come to again*: Mrs Kopecka, you are the victim of certain conflicts between certain factions of the Gestapo and the SS, enough said. However, consider yourself under my protection, I shall be back shortly to discuss the matter with you in private. *Exit.*

MRS KOPECKA *staggering back to the bar, where she ties a drying cloth around her bleeding forehead*: Anyone like a beer?

KATI *looking at Schweyk's hat, which is still hanging over the table where the regulars sit*: They didn't even let him take his hat.

CUSTOMER: He'll not come back alive.

Enter young Prochazka, sheepishly. He is horrified to see Mrs Kopecka's blood-stained bandage.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: What happened to you, Mrs Kopecka? I saw the SS driving away—was it the SS?

CUSTOMERS: They hit her over the head with a truncheon

because they said the Chalice was mixed up in the black market.—Even Mr Brettschneider of the Gestapo spoke up for her, or else she'd have been arrested.—They've taken one fellow away.

MRS KOPECKA: Mr Prochazka, the Chalice is no place for you. Only true Czechs come here.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: Honestly, Mrs K., I've felt terrible since I last saw you, and I've learned my lesson. Can't you give me a chance to make up for it?

Mrs Kopecka's icy look makes him shudder, and he creeps out, crushed.

KATI: The SS are jumpy too because yesterday they pulled another SS man out of the Moldau with a hole in his left side.

ANNA: They throw enough Czechs in.

CUSTOMER: And all because they're having a bad time of it in the East.

FIRST CUSTOMER *to Baloun*: Wasn't that your friend they took away?

BALOUN *bursting into tears*: It's my fault. It all comes from my gluttony. Time and again I've asked the Virgin Mary to give me strength and shrivel up my stomach somehow, but it's no use. I've got my best friend in such a mess they'll probably shoot him tonight, and if not he can thank his stars and it'll be first thing tomorrow.

MRS KOPECKA *putting a slivovitz in front of him*: Drink that. Crying won't help.

BALOUN: Bless you. I've broken things up between you and your young man, and you'll not find a better one, it's only that he's weak. If I'd made the vow you asked me to maybe it wouldn't all look so black. If only I could make it now, but can I? On an empty stomach? Oh God, where will it all end?

MRS KOPECKA *goes back to the bar and begins to rinse glasses again*: Put a penny in the piano. I'll tell you where it will end.

A customer puts a coin in the player piano. It lights up and a

transparency shows the moon over the Moldau as it flows majestically away into the distance. As she rinses her glasses Mrs Kopecka sings the 'Song of the Moldau':

The stones of the Moldau are stirring and shifting
In Prague lie three emperors turning to clay.
The great shall not stay great, the darkness is lifting.
The night has twelve hours, but at last comes the day.

For times have to change. All the boundless ambitions
Of those now in power will soon have been spent.
Like bloodspattered cocks they defend their positions
But times have to change, which no force can prevent.

The stones of the Moldau are stirring and shifting
In Prague lie three emperors turning to clay.
The great shall not stay great, the darkness is lifting.
The night has twelve hours, but at last comes the day.

INTERLUDE IN THE HIGHER REGIONS

Hitler and General von Bock, known as 'the Killer', in front of a map of the Soviet Union. Both are over life size. Martial music.

VON BOCK

Excuse me, Herr Hitler, your new offensive
Is costing thousands of tanks, bombers and guns, and
they're expensive.
On top of that, men's lives: well, all the troops call me a
bleeder
Meaning just that I obey my leader
But if you think Stalingrad's a pushover, I tell you you're
mistaken.

HITLER

Herr General von Bock, Stalingrad will be taken
I've told all my people that we're winning.

VON BOOK

Herr Hitler, the winter is almost beginning

Just imagine the snowdrifts soon as the blizzards blow around here.

We would do better not to be found here . . .

HITLER

Herr von Bock, I'll round up the peoples of Europe like so many cattle

And the *Little Man* shall salvage my battle.

Herr von Bock, you are not to let down the side.

VON BOCK

And my reinforcements?

HITLER

Will be supplied.

7

Cell in a military prison with Czech prisoners who are waiting for their medical. Among them Schweyk. They wait stripped to the waist, but all are pretending to have the most pitiful illnesses. One, for example, lies stretched out on the ground as if dying.

A BENT MAN: I've seen my lawyer and got some very reassuring information. They can't put us in the army unless we want to go. It's illegal.

MAN ON CRUTCHES: Then what are you going around bent double for if you don't expect to be put in?

BENT MAN: Just in case.

The man on crutches laughs ironically.

DYING MAN *on the ground*: They wouldn't risk it with cripples like us. They're unpopular enough already.

SHORT-SIGHTED MAN *triumphantly*: They say in Amsterdam a German officer was crossing one of those things called a gracht, a bit on edge round eleven at night, and he asked a Dutchman what time it was. All the Dutchman did was give him a solemn look and say 'My watch has stopped'. He walked on unhappily and went up to another, and before

he had a chance to ask the man said he'd left his watch at home. The officer's supposed to have shot himself.

DYING MAN: He couldn't stand it. The contempt.

SCHWEYK: They don't shoot themselves as much as they shoot other people. There was a young innkeeper in Vrzlov whose wife was deceiving him with his own brother, and he punished the two of them with contempt and nothing else. He'd found a pair of her drawers in his brother's pony-cart, so he put them on the dressing table thinking it would make her ashamed. They had him certified incompetent by a local court, sold his pub and ran away together. He was right to this extent, though: his wife told a girl friend she'd felt a bit uncomfortable about taking his fur-lined winter overcoat with her.

BENT MAN: What are you here for?

SCHWEYK: Black market. They could have shot me, but the Gestapo needed me as a witness against the SS. I was helped by the quarrels among the bigshots. They pointed out to me that I'm lucky with my name, because it's Schweyk with a 'y', but if I spell it with an 'i' that makes me of German extraction and I can be conscripted.

MAN WITH CRUTCHES: They're even taking them from the long-term prisons now.

BENT MAN: Only if they're of German extraction.

MAN WITH CRUTCHES: Or voluntary German extraction, like this chap.

BENT MAN: The only hope is to be a cripple.

SHORT-SIGHTED MAN: I'm short-sighted. I'd never recognize an officer so I wouldn't be able to salute.

SCHWEYK: Then they could put you in a listening-post reporting enemy aircraft, it's even better if you're blind for that, because blind men develop very sharp hearing. There was a farmer in Socz for instance put out his dog's eyes to make it hear better. So they'll have a use for you.

SHORT-SIGHTED MAN *desperately*: I know a chimney-sweep in Brevnov—give him ten crowns and he'll give you such a temperature you'll want to jump out of the window.

BENT MAN: That's nothing, in Vršovice there's a midwife'll pull your leg so far out of joint for 20 crowns that you're a cripple for the rest of your life.

MAN WITH CRUTCHES: I had mine pulled out of joint for five.

DYING MAN: I didn't have to pay anything. I've got a real strangulated hernia.

MAN WITH CRUTCHES: If you have they'll operate you in Pancrac hospital, and where'll you be then?

SCHWEYK *gaily*: Anyone listening to you lot'd think you didn't want to fight for the defence of civilization against Bolshevism.

A soldier comes in and busies himself with the bucket.

SOLDIER: You've mucked up this bucket again. You can't even shit properly, you foul lot.

SCHWEYK: We were just speaking of Bolshevism. Do you people know what Bolshevism is? The sworn accomplice of Wall Street that's determined on our destruction under the leadership of the Jew Rosenfelt in the White House? *The soldier keeps fiddling with the bucket in order to hear more, so Schweyk goes on calmly*: But they don't know what they're up against. Do you know the song about the gunner of Przemyśl in the First World War, when we were fighting the Czar? *He sings*:

He stood beside his gun

And just kept loading on.

He stood beside his gun

And just kept loading on

When a bullet very neatly

Cut his hands away completely.

He didn't turn a hair

Just kept on standing there.

He stood there by his gun

And just kept loading on.

The Russians are only fighting because they have to.

They've no agriculture, because they've turned out the big landowners, and their industry's hamstrung by their mania

for levelling down and because the more thoughtful workers resent the managers' high salaries. In other words there's nothing to beat, and once we've beaten it the Americans will have missed the boat. Am I right?

SOLDIER: Shut up, Conversation's not allowed.

He goes off angrily with the bucket.

DYING MAN: I think you're an informer.

SCHWEYK *cheerfully*: Informer, me? No. It's just that I listen to the German radio regularly. You ought to try it, it's a scream,

DYING MAN: It's not. It's a disgrace.

SCHWEYK *firmly*: It's a scream.

SHORT-SIGHTED MAN: That doesn't mean you have to arsecrawl to them though.

SCHWEYK *didactically*: Don't say that. It's an art. There's many a little insect would be glad to crawl up a tiger. The tiger can't get at him, and he feels pretty safe, but it's the getting in is the problem.

BENT MAN: Don't be vulgar. It isn't a nice sight, when Czechs will put up with anything.

SCHWEYK: That's what Jaroslav Vaniek told the consumptive pedlar. The landlord of the Swan in Budweis, a great ox of a man, only half filled the pedlar's glass, and when the poor wreck said nothing Vaniek turned to him and said 'Why d'you stand for that, you're as much to blame as he is'. The pedlar just sloshed Vaniek a fourpenny one, that was all. And now I'm going to ring the bell and get them to get a move on with their war, my time's valuable. *Stands up.*

LITTLE FAT MAN *who has so far been sitting to one side*: You are not to ring that bell.

SCHWEYK: Why not?

LITTLE FAT MAN *authoritatively*: Because things are moving quite fast enough for us.

DYING MAN: Very true. Why did they pull you in?

LITTLE FAT MAN: Because my dog was stolen.

SCHWEYK *interested*: It wasn't a pom, was it?

LITTLE FAT MAN: What do you know about it?

SCHWEYK: I bet your name's Vojta. I'm very pleased to meet you. *He offers his hand, which the fat man ignores.* I'm Schweyk, I don't suppose that means anything to you, but you can shake my hand, I bet you're not pro-German any more now they've got you in here.

LITTLE FAT MAN: I accused the SS of having stolen my dog, on the evidence of one of my servants, is that good enough for you?

SCHWEYK: Quite good enough. Back in Budweis there was a teacher who had a down on one of his pupils and this pupil accused him of having a newspaper on the music stand while he was playing the organ in church. He was very religious and his wife had a lot to put up with because he had stopped her wearing short skirts, but after that they twitted him and teased him so much that in the end he said he'd even stopped believing in the Marriage at Cana. You'll march off to the Caucasus all right and shit on old Hitler, only like the landlord of the Swan said it all depends where you shit on what.

LITTLE FAT MAN: If you're called Schweyk there was a fellow who pushed up to me, a young man, as I was being brought in at the gate. He just managed to say 'Ask for Mr Schweyk' and then they got the gate open. He must still be standing around down there.

SCHWEYK: I'll have a look. I've kept expecting that one morning there'd be a little bunch of people waiting outside the prison, the landlady from the Chalice, she wouldn't want to be left out, and maybe a big fat man, all waiting for Schweyk, and no Schweyk there for them. Help me up, one of you fellows. *He goes to the little cell window and climbs on the back of the man with the crutches to look out.*

It's young Prochazka. I don't think he'll be able to see me. Give me your crutches.

He gets them and waves them around. Then young Prochazka evidently sees him and Schweyk makes himself understood with broad gestures. He outlines a fat man with a beard—Baloun—and makes the gesture of stuffing food into one's mouth and carrying

something under one's arm. Then he gets down off the man's back.

What you just saw me doing probably surprised you. We had a gentlemen's agreement, that was what he came for, I always felt he was a decent type. I was just repeating what he was saying, with all that business, so he'd see I'd got it. He probably wanted me to be able to march off to Russia with nothing on my mind.

Commands are heard outside, and marching feet, then a military band begins to play the Horst Wessel march.

DYING MAN: What's going on? Did you see anything?

SCHWEYK: There's a crowd of people at the gate. Probably a battalion marching out.

BENT MAN: That's a dreadful tune.

SCHWEYK: I think it's nice, it's sad yet it's got a swing to it.

MAN ON CRUTCHES: We'll soon be hearing it a lot more.

They play the Horst Wessel march whenever they can. Some pimp wrote it. I'd like to know what the words mean.

LITTLE FAT MAN: I can translate it for you. The banner high / And tightly closed the columns / Storm troops march on with firm and steady tread. / The comrades who have shed their heroes' blood before us / March on with us in spirit straight ahead.

SCHWEYK: I know a different version, we used to sing it at the Chalice. *He sings to the accompaniment of the military band, singing the chorus to the tune and the verses to the drumming in between:*

Led by the drummer the
Sheep trot in bleating.
Their skins make the drumskin
Which he is beating.

The butcher calls. They don't see where he's leading
But march like sheep with firm and steady tread.
The sheep before them in the slaughterhouse lie bleeding
And march in spirit once their body's dead.

They hold up their hands to show
The work that they do
Hands that are stained with blood
And empty too.

The butcher calls. They don't see where he's leading
But march like sheep with firm and steady tread.
The sheep before them in the slaughterhouse lie bleeding
And march in spirit once their body's dead.

The crosses that go before
On big blood-red banners
Are angled to twist the poor
Like bloody great spanners.

The butcher calls. They don't see where he's leading
But march like sheep with firm and steady tread.
The sheep before them in the slaughterhouse lie bleeding
And march in spirit once their body's dead.

The other prisoners have joined in the second and third choruses. At the end the cell door opens and a German military doctor appears.
DOCTOR: Nice of you all to join in the singing so merrily.
You'll be pleased to know that I consider you all healthy enough to join the army, and that you're hereby enlisted. Stand up, the lot of you, and put your shirts on. Ready to move off in ten minutes. *Exit.*

The prisoners, crushed, put their shirts on again.

BENT MAN: Without a medical examination it's completely illegal.

DYING MAN: I've got cancer of the stomach, I can prove it.

SCHWEYK *to the little fat man*: They'll put us in different units, I'm told, so we're not together and can't start bugging about. All the best, Mr Vojta, pleased to meet you, and see you all again in the Chalice at six o'clock after the war.

Schweyk, greatly moved, shakes everyone's hand as the cell door opens again. He marches out first, smartly.

SCHWEYK: Heitler! On to Moscow!

Weeks later. Deep in the wintry Russian steppes Hitler's good soldier Schweyk is marching to join his unit in the Stalingrad area. He is muffled up in a huge pile of clothes on account of the cold.

SCHWEYK *sings*:

When we marched off to Jaromir
Believe it, you folks, or not
We reached the town at suppertime
And got there on the dot.

A German patrol challenges him.

FIRST SOLDIER: Halt! Password!

SCHWEYK: 'Blitzkrieg!' Could you tell me the way to Stalingrad, I've got accidentally separated from my draft and I've been marching all day.

The first soldier examines his army papers.

SECOND SOLDIER *passing his flask*: Where are you from?

SCHWEYK: Budweis.

SOLDIER: Then you're a Czech.

SCHWEYK *nods*: I've heard things aren't too good up at the front. *The two soldiers look at each other and laugh grimly.*

FIRST SOLDIER: What would a Czech be looking for up there?

SCHWEYK: I'm not looking for anything, I'm coming to help protect civilization against Bolshevism just like you, or else it'll be a bullet in the guts, am I right?

FIRST SOLDIER: You could be a deserter.

SCHWEYK: Not me, because you'd shoot me on the spot for breaking my oath as a soldier and not dying for my Führer, Heil Hitler.

SECOND SOLDIER: So you're one of the keen ones, are you?
Takes his flask back.

SCHWEYK: I'm as keen as Tonda Novotny when he applied at the vicarage in Vysocany for the job of sexton not knowing if the church was protestant or Catholic, and because the

vicar was in his braces and there was a woman in the room he said he was a protestant and got it wrong for a start.

FIRST SOLDIER: And why must it be Stalingrad of all places, you doubtful ally?

SCHWEYK: Because that's where my regimental office is, mate, where I've got to get my papers stamped to show I've reported, otherwise they're bugger all use and I shan't be able to show my face in Prague again. Heil Hitler!

FIRST SOLDIER: And suppose we said to you 'Sod Hitler!' and we're deserting to the Russians and taking you with us because you can speak Russian, because Czech is supposed to be like it.

SCHWEYK: Czech's very like it, but I'd say you'd do better not to, I don't know my way around here and I'd sooner get directions to Stalingrad

FIRST SOLDIER: Perhaps you'd rather not trust us—is that the reason?

SCHWEYK: I'd rather think you were good soldiers. Because if you were deserting you'd be bound to be taking something with you for the Russians, a machine-gun or something, maybe a good telescope, something they could use, and you'd hold it up in front of you so they wouldn't shoot you at sight. That's the way it's done, I'm told.

FIRST SOLDIER *laughs*: You mean they'll understand that even if it isn't Russian. I get you, you're a crafty bastard. And you'd sooner say you just want to know where your grave at Stalingrad is. It's that way. *He shows him.*

SECOND SOLDIER: And if anyone asks you, we're a military patrol and we gave you the full treatment, got that?

FIRST SOLDIER *as he goes*: And that's not bad advice of yours, mate.

SCHWEYK *waving after them*: Glad to help. Be seeing you. *The soldiers move off quickly. Schweyk too continues in the direction he was shown, but he can be seen to be wandering from it in a wide arc. He vanishes into the gloom. When he reappears on the other side he stops for a short time at a signpost and reads: 'Stalingrad—50 km.' He shakes his head and marches on. The moving clouds in*

the sky are now red from distant fires. He looks at them interestedly as he marches.

SCHWEYK *sings*:

When Hitler sent for me
To help him win his war
I thought the whole damn lark would last
A fortnight and no more.

While he continues to march, smoking his pipe, the clouds turn pale again and the regulars' table at the Chalice appears, bathed in pink light. Baloun is kneeling on the floor, next to him stands Mrs Kopecka with her embroidery, and at the table Anna is sitting behind a beer.

BALOUN *as if reciting the litany*: I now swear of my own free will and on an empty stomach, since all attempts by everybody to organize some meat for me have failed, that's to say without me having had a real meal, by the Virgin Mary and all the saints, that I will never volunteer for the Nazi army, and may Almighty God help me. I do this in memory of my friend Mr Schweyk, now marching across the icy Russian steppes faithfully doing his duty because he has to. He was a good man.

MRS KOPECKA: Right, you can stand up now.

ANNA *takes a drink from the beer mug, stands up and embraces him*:

And now we can get married as soon as we've got the papers from Protivin. *After kissing him, to Mrs Kopecka*: What a pity things haven't worked out for you.

Young Prochazka stands in the doorway, a parcel under his arm.

MRS KOPECKA: Mr Prochazka, I forbade you ever to set foot in here again. It's all over between us. Since your great love doesn't even stretch to two pounds of pickled pork.

YOUNG PROCHAZKA: What if I've brought it, though?
Shows his parcel. Two pounds of pickled pork.

MRS KOPECKA: What, you've brought it? In spite of what you might get if they caught you?

ANNA: It's not really necessary any more, is it? Mr Baloun has taken his oath without.

MRS KOPECKA: But you must admit it proves a genuine

affection on Mr Prochazka's part. Rudolf! *She embraces him ardently.*

ANNA: That would please Mr Schweyk if he knew about it, poor old fellow. *She looks tenderly at Schweyk's bowler, which is hanging over the regulars' table.* Take good care of that hat, Mrs Kopecka, I'm certain Mr Schweyk will be back to collect it after the war.

BALOUN *sniffing the parcel*: Some lentils would go well with that.

The Chalice disappears again. From upstage staggers a drunk in two thick sheepskins and a steel helmet. Schweyk encounters him.

DRUNK: Halt! Who are you? I can see you're one of our lot and not a gorilla, thank God. I'm Chaplain Ignatius Bullinger from Metz, you don't happen to have a drop of kirsch with you, do you?

SCHWEYK: Beg to report I haven't.

CHAPLAIN: That's odd. I don't want it for boozing, as you may have thought, you swine, admit it, that's what you think of your priest; I need it for my car with the field altar back there, I've run out of petrol, they're keeping the Lord short of petrol in Rostov, they're going to have to answer for that all right when they stand before the throne of God and He asks in a voice like thunder 'You motorized My altar, but what about the petrol?'

SCHWEYK: I don't know, your Reverence. Could you tell me which is the way to Stalingrad?

CHAPLAIN: God knows. Do you know the one about the bishop who asks the ship's captain in a storm 'Are we going to make it?', and the captain answers 'We're in God's hands now, bishop', and the bishop just says 'As bad as that?' and bursts into tears?

SCHWEYK: Is Lieutenant Bullinger of the SS your brother, sir?

CHAPLAIN: Yes for my sins. D'you know him? So you've no kirsch or vodka?

SCHWEYK: No, and you'll catch cold if you sit down in the snow.

CHAPLAIN: It doesn't matter about me. But they're mean with their petrol, they'll see how they get along without God and without the Word of God in battle. By land, sea and air, and so on. I only joined their stupid Nazi Union for German Christians after the most terrible struggles with my conscience. For their sake I've scrapped Jesus the Jew and made him a Christian in my sermons, with lots of bull about his blue eyes and references to Wotan, and I tell them the world has got to be German, even if it costs rivers of blood, because I'm a worm, a wretched apostate worm who's betrayed his beliefs for pay, and they go and give me too little petrol and just look what they've brought me to.

SCHWEYK: The Russian steppes, chaplain, and you'd better come back to Stalingrad with me and sleep it off. *He pulls him to his feet and drags him along a few yards.* You'll have to walk on your own feet, though, or I'll leave you lying here, I've got to find my draft and come to Hitler's rescue.

CHAPLAIN: I can't leave my field altar standing here or it'll be captured by the Bolsheviks, and what then? They're heathens. I came past a cottage just over there, the chimney was smoking, d'you think they'd have any vodka, just tap them on the head with your rifle butt and Bob's your uncle. Are you a German Christian?

SCHWEYK: No, the ordinary sort. Now don't start being sick over yourself, it'll freeze on you.

CHAPLAIN: Freeze? I'm as cold as the devil. I'll hot things up for them at Stalingrad, though.

SCHWEYK: You've got to get there first.

CHAPLAIN: I've no real confidence left any more. *Calmly, almost soberly:* You know, What's-his-name, they laugh at me to my face, me the priest of God, when I threaten them with hell. The only explanation I can see is that they think they're there already. Religion's going to pieces, and it's Hitler who's responsible, don't tell anybody I said so.

SCHWEYK: Hitler's a wet fart, I'm telling you because you're drunk. And who's responsible for Hitler, them that handed him Czechoslovakia on a plate at Munich for 'peace in our

time', and a fat long time it was too. But the war's lasted all right, and for a lot of people it's been 'war in our time' from what I can see.

CHAPLAIN: So you're against the war that has to be fought against the godless Bolsheviks, you swine. D'you know I'm going to have you shot when we get to Stalingrad?

SCHWEYK: If you don't pull yourself together and get a move on you'll never get there. I'm not against war, and I'm not walking to Stalingrad just for a lark, but because like Naczek the cook said back in the First World War 'Get near the shooting, you'll find something cooking'.

CHAPLAIN: Don't give me that. You're saying to yourself 'They can stuff their war', I can see it from your face. *Grabs him.* What do you want to be pro-war for, what do you get out of it, confess it means bugger all to you.

SCHWEYK *roughly*: I'm marching to Stalingrad, and you are too, because it's orders and we'd probably starve here left to ourselves. I've told you once already.

They march on.

CHAPLAIN: War's a depressing business on foot. *Stops.* There's that cottage, we'll go in there, got your safety-catch off?

A cottage appears, they go up to it.

SCHWEYK: But just one thing, don't kick up a row, they're people like you and me, and you've drunk enough.

CHAPLAIN: Have your finger on the trigger, they're heathens, don't answer back.

Out of the cottage come an old peasant woman, and a young woman with a little child.

CHAPLAIN: Look, they're going to run away. We've got to stop that. Ask where they've buried the vodka. And look at that shawl she's wearing, I'll have that, I'm freezing like hell.

SCHWEYK: You're freezing because you're drunk and you've got two fur coats already. *To the young woman, who stands without moving:* Good evening, which is the way to Stalingrad?

The young woman points rather absent-mindedly.

CHAPLAIN: Does she admit they've got vodka?

SCHWEYK: You sit down, I'll deal with them and then we'll go on, I don't want any trouble. *To the woman, cordially:* Why are you standing outside the house like that? Were you just going away? *The woman nods.* That's a thin shawl you've got on, though; have you nothing else? It's not really enough, is it?

CHAPLAIN *sitting on the ground:* Use your rifle butt, they're gorillas, the lot of them. Heathens.

SCHWEYK *roughly:* You bloody well shut up. *To the woman:* Vodka? This man is ill.

Schweyk has accompanied all his questions with illustrative gestures. The woman shakes her head.

CHAPLAIN *bad-temperedly:* You shaking your head? I'll show you. Here am I freezing, and you shake your head. *He scrambles to his feet with difficulty and staggers towards the woman, his fist raised. She retreats into the cottage, closing the door after her. The chaplain kicks it in and pushes his way in.* I'll settle your hash.

SCHWEYK *who has vainly tried to hold him back:* You stay out. It's not your house. *He follows him in. The old woman goes in too. Then a scream is heard from the woman and sound of a fight. Schweyk from within:* And put that knife away. Stay still, will you! I'll break your arm, you swine. Right, outside!

Out of the cottage comes the woman with the child. She has one of the chaplain's coats on. Behind her comes the old woman.

SCHWEYK *following them into the open:* Let him sleep it off. Make sure you get well away.

OLD WOMAN *curtseys deeply to Schweyk in the old style:* God protect you, soldier, you're a good man, and if we had any bread left I'd give you a crust. You look as if you could do with it. Which way's your road?

SCHWEYK: To Stalingrad, ma, to the battle. Could you tell me how I get there?

OLD WOMAN: You're a Slav, you speak the way we do, you haven't come to murder, you're not one of Hitler's lot, God bless you.

She begins to bless him with broad gestures.

SCHWEYK *without embarrassment*: Don't worry, ma, I'm a Slav, and don't waste your blessing on me, I'm a collaborationist.

OLD WOMAN: God shall protect you, my son, you've a pure heart, you've come to help us, you'll help beat Hitler's lot.

SCHWEYK *firmly*: No offence, I've got to get on, it's not my own choice. And I'm beginning to believe you must be deaf, ma.

OLD WOMAN *in spite of the fact that her daughter keeps tugging at her sleeve*: You'll help us to get rid of these bandits, hurry soldier, and God bless you.

The young woman pulls the old one away, and they move off. Schweyk marches on shaking his head. Night has fallen and the stars have appeared. Schweyk stops at a signpost again and turns a dark lantern on to it. Astonished he reads: 'Stalingrad—50 km' and marches on. Suddenly shots ring out. Schweyk immediately puts his hands up, holding his rifle, in order to surrender. No one comes, however, and the shots cease. Schweyk goes on more quickly. When he again appears in his circular course he is out of breath and sits down on a snowdrift.

SCHWEYK *sings*:

When we were stationed in Kovno
They couldn't have been slicker
They had the boots from off our feet
For one tiny glass of liquor.

The pipe sinks from his mouth, he dozes off and dreams. The regulars' table at the Chalice appears in golden light. Around it sit Mrs Kopecka in her bridal gown, young Prochazka in his Sunday suit, Kati, Anna and Baloun. In front of the latter is a full plate.

MRS KOPECKA: And what you're getting for the wedding breakfast, Mr Baloun, is your pickled pork. You swore without it, and that's to your credit, but a little bit of meat now and then won't hurt to help you keep your vow.

BALOUN *eating*: You know, I really do like eating. God bless it. The dear Lord created everything, from the sun down to the carraway seed. *Indicating his plate*: Can that be a sin?

Pigeons fly, chickens peck up seed from the earth. The landlord of the Huss knew seventeen ways of cooking a chicken, five sweet, six savoury, four with stuffing. 'The earth brings forth wine for me, likewise bread, and I'm not able to use them', the minister at Budweis used to say, that wasn't allowed to eat because he had diabetes. I had a hare at the Schlossbräu in Pilsen back in 1932, the cook has died since, so people don't go there any more, and I've never had another like it. It was in gravy with dumplings. There's nothing special about that, but there was something in that gravy did things to the dumplings, quite fantastic, they'd hardly have recognized themselves, inspired they were, really first class, I've never come across anything like it again, the cook took the recipe to the grave with him. It's a real loss to mankind.

ANNA: Don't complain. What do you suppose Mr Schweyk would say about it, when he probably hasn't even got a baked potato to his name?

BALOUN: That's true, mustn't grumble. You can always manage. In Pudonice when my sister got married they had a real crowd, thirty of them, it was at the pub there, girls and chaps and the old folk too, and they kept going right through soup, veal, pork, chicken, two roast calves and two fat pigs, the lot from snout to tail, and dumplings with it and great barrels of sauerkraut, and first beer and then schnapps. All I remember is my plate was never empty and I had a bucketful of beer or a tumber of schnapps after every mouthful. At one point there was absolute silence, just like in church, that was when they brought the roast pork in. They were all such good pals together sitting there, eating their fill, I'd have gone through fire for any one of them. And there were all sorts among them, there was a judge from the County Court at Pilsen used to really have it in for the thieves and the workers when he'd got his wig on. Eating draws people's sting.

MRS KOPECKA: In honour of Mr Baloun I am now going to sing the 'Song of the Chalice'. *She sings:*

Come right in and take a seat
Join us at the table
Soup and Moldau fish to eat
Much as you are able.

If you need a bite of bread
And a roof above your head
You're a man and that will do.
The place of honour's here for you.
If you've 80 Hellers.

We don't want to know your life
Everyone's invited.
Step inside and bring the wife
We shall be delighted.

All you need's a friendly face
Clever talk is out of place
Eat your cheese and drink your beer
And you'll find a welcome here
So will 80 Hellers.

One day soon we shall begin
Looking at the weather
And we'll find the world's an inn
Where men come together.

All alike will come inside
Nobody will be denied
Here's a roof against the storm
Where the freezing can get warm
Even on 80 Hellers.

Everyone has joined in the refrain.

BALOUN: My grandfather used to be an accountant with the water board, and when they told him at the Pankrac clinic he'd have to cut down on his food or go blind he answered 'I've seen quite enough, but I haven't eaten enough by a long chalk'. *Suddenly stops eating.* Christ, let's hope old Schweyk isn't freezing to death out there in that icy cold.

ANNA: He mustn't lie down. It's just when you feel nice and warm that you're closest to dying of exposure, they say.

The Chalice disappears. It is daytime again. A snowstorm has set in. Schweyk moves beneath a blanket of flakes. The rattle of tank tracks becomes audible.

SCHWEYK *sitting up*: Nearly dropped off. But now, on to Stalingrad!

He works his way up and starts marching again. Then out of the driving snow a large armoured vehicle appears full of German soldiers with chalk white or blueish faces under their steel helmets, all of them wrapped up in every kind of rags, skins, even women's skirts.

THE SOLDIERS *sing the 'German Miserere'*:

One day our superiors said: Germany, awaken
The small town of Danzig has got to be taken.
They gave us tanks and bombers, then Poland was invaded.
In two weeks at the outside we had made it.
God preserve us.

One day our superiors said: Germany, awaken
Now Norway and France have got to be taken.
They gave us tanks and bombers, both countries were
invaded.
Five weeks of 1940, and we'd made it.
God preserve us.

One day our superiors said: Germany, awaken
The Balkans and Russia have got to be taken.
The third year saw the Balkans and Russia both invaded.
We should have won, but something has delayed it.
God preserve us.

Wait till our superiors say: Germany, awaken
The depths of the ocean and the moon must be taken.
Over Russia's cold steppes they've left us to roam
And the fighting's tough and we don't know our way home.
God preserve us and bring us back home alive.

The armoured vehicle disappears again in the snowstorm. Schweyk marches on. A signpost appears, pointing at right angles to his

route. Schweyk ignores it. Suddenly, however, he stops and listens. Then he bends down, whistles softly and snaps his fingers. Out of the snow-covered undergrowth creeps a starving mongrel.

SCHWEYK: I knew you were there in the bushes, hanging about and wondering whether to come out or not, eh? You're a cross between a schnauzer and an alsatian, with a bit of mastiff in the middle. I shall call you Ajax. Stop cringing and cut out that shivering, I can't stand it. *He marches on, followed by the dog.* We're going to Stalingrad. You'll find other dogs there and plenty going on. If you want to get through the war in one piece, keep close to the others and stick to routine, don't volunteer for anything, lie doggo till you get a chance to bite. War doesn't last for ever, any more than peace does, and when it's over I'll take you along to the Chalice and we'll have to keep an eye on Baloun to see he doesn't eat you, Ajax. There'll still be people wanting dogs, and pedigrees'll still have to be faked because they want pure breeds, it's a load of tripe but that's what they want. Don't get under my feet, or you'll get a fourpenny one. On to Stalingrad!
The blizzard gets thicker and envelops them.

EPILOGUE

Hitler's good soldier Schweyk is marching untiringly to Stalingrad, which remains just as far away as ever, when a wild music is heard amidst the snowstorm and a larger-than-life figure appears: Adolf Hitler. The historic meeting between Hitler and Schweyk takes place.

HITLER

Halt! Who goes there? Friend or foe?

SCHWEYK *giving the customary salute:*

Heitlér!

HITLER *over the storm:*

I can't hear what you say.

SCHWEYK *louder:*

I said Heitler. Can you hear me now?

HITLER

Yes.

SCHWEYK

It's the wind that carries it away.

HITLER

You're right, and we seem to be getting some snow. Do you recognize me?

SCHWEYK

Beg to report, sir, no.

HITLER

I am the Führer.

Schweyk, whose hand has remained up in the Nazi salute, raises the other to join it in a gesture of surrender, dropping his gun.

SCHWEYK

Holy Saint Joseph!

HITLER

At ease. Who are you?

SCHWEYK

I'm Schweyk from Budweis at the bend in the Moldau. And I've come to help you at Stalingrad. But would you mind telling me just one thing: where is it?

HITLER

How the devil can you expect me to know any of our positions

In these blasted Bolshevistic traffic conditions?

The direct road from Rostov to Stalingrad looked no longer than my finger on the map.

It is, though;—filthy Communistic trap!

What's more, the winter's set in early again this year—on the first of November instead of the third.

It's the second year running that that's occurred.

This winter's probably all part of their damned Bolshevistic theories.

As a matter of fact at the moment I don't even know where the front or the rear is.

I set out from the principle that the stronger side would win.

SCHWEYK

That's just what's happened.

He has begun to stamp his feet and fling his arms around his chest, being extremely cold.

HITLER

Mr Schweyk, remember, if the Third Reich should cave in the forces of nature were the only thing that could hold me.

SCHWEYK

Yes, the winter and the Bolsheviks. So you've already told me.

HITLER *beginning an extended explanation:*

History shows us that East and West don't mix, and if . . .

SCHWEYK

Look, you explain it to me on the way, or else we'll be frozen stiff.

HITLER

Right. Then forward.

SCHWEYK

But which way shall we go?

HITLER

Let's try the north.

They advance a few paces to the north.

SCHWEYK *stops, sticks two fingers in his mouth and whistles to Hitler:*

That way there's some pretty deep snow.

HITLER

Then the south.

They advance a few paces southwards.

SCHWEYK *stops and whistles:*

That way there are mountains of dead men.

HITLER

Then I'll push East.

They advance eastwards a few paces.

SCHWEYK *stops and whistles:*

That way you'll find an awful lot of red men.

138 Schweyk in the Second World War

HITLER

You're right.

SCHWEYK

Maybe we could go home then? That'd make
a bit of sense.

HITLER

What: and face my German people without any defence?

*Hitler rushes in each direction, one after the other. Schweyk keeps
whistling him back.*

HITLER

East! West! North! South!

SCHWEYK

You can't stay here, and you can't get out.

Hitler's movements in all directions become quicker.

SCHWEYK *begins to sing:*

Yes, you cannot retreat, and you cannot progress.

You're all rotten on top, below you're a mess.

The east wind is far too cold, and hellfire is far too hot

So they've left it to me now to say whether or not

I should heap you with shit or riddle you with shot.

Hitler's desperate attempts at escape have turned into a wild dance.

CHORUS OF ALL THE ACTORS *taking off their masks and
going down to the footlights:*

For times have to change. All the boundless ambitions

Of those now in power will soon have been spent.

Like bloodspattered cocks they defend their positions

But times have to change—which no force can prevent.

The stones of the Moldau are stirring and shifting

In Prague lie three emperors turning to clay.

The great shall not stay great, the darkness is lifting.

The night has twelve hours, but at last comes the day.

Appendix

HENRY SLEPT BESIDE HIS NEWLY WEDDED*

Henry slept beside his newly wedded
 Heiress to a castle on the Rhine
 Snake bites, which tormented the false lover
 Would not let him peacefully recline.

At the stroke of twelve the curtain parted.
 On the sill a pale cold hand appeared.
 In a shroud he saw his Wilhelmina
 And her mournful, ghostly voice he heard.

Do not tremble, said his Wilhelmina;
 Faithless lover, do not be afraid.
 I have not come here in hate or anger
 I've not come to curse your marriage bed.

Bitter grief my poor young life has shortened
 I have died because I loved you well
 But the Lord has fortified my spirit
 Saved me from the headlong plunge to hell.

Why did I believe your protestations
 That your love would always be the same
 Never dreaming that for you to vanquish
 Maiden's heart was but a paltry game?

Do not weep. This world does not deserve it
 'Tis not worth a single tear or moan.
 Live serene and happy with Eliza
 Now that you have got her for your own.

Henry, you have treasure, ah, uncounted
 Use it now to give my soul repose.
 Give your Wilhelmine the peace of spirit
 You denied her living, heaven knows.

Sacrifice! cried Henry in his fever;
 That's what you have come to ask, he cried.

* This street ballad is sung by Kati and Anna in scene 4. Translated
 by Ralph Manheim.

140 Schweyk in the Second World War

Whereupon the poor spurned woman vanished
And the churl committed suicide.

God had mercy on her, but the faithless
Lover was condemned beyond repair.
Still he lives, an evil spooky monster
Wand'ring in the dreary midnight air.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle

Collaborator: R. BERLAU

Translators: JAMES AND TANIA STERN, *with* W. H. AUDEN

Characters

Delegates of the Galinsk goat-breeding kolchos: an old peasant, a peasant woman, a young peasant, a very young workman · Members of the Rosa Luxemburg fruit-growing kolchos: an old peasant, a peasant woman, the agronomist, the girl tractor driver; the wounded soldier and other peasants from the kolchos · The expert from the capital · The singer Arkadi Cheidze · His musicians · Georgi Abashvili, the Governor · His wife, Natella · Their son, Michael · Shalva, the adjutant · Arsen Kazbeki, the fat prince · The rider from the capital · Niko Mikadze and Mikha Loladze, doctors · Simon Chachava, a soldier · Grusha Vachnadze, a kitchen-maid · Three architects · Four chambermaids: Assia, Masha, Sulika and Fat Nina · A nurse · A man cook · A woman cook · A stableman · Servants in the governor's palace · The governor's and the fat prince's Ironshirts and soldiers · Beggars and petitioners · The old peasant with the milk · Two elegant ladies · The innkeeper · The servant · A corporal · 'Block-head', a soldier · A peasant woman and her husband · Three merchants · Lavrenti Vachnadze, Grusha's brother · His wife, Aniko · Their stableman · The peasant woman, for a time Grusha's mother-in-law · Yussup, her son · Brother Anastasius, a monk · Wedding guests · Children · Azdak, the village clerk · Shauva, a policeman · A refugee, the Grand Duke · The doctor · The invalid · The limping man · The blackmailer · Ludovica, the innkeeper's daughter-in-law · A poor old peasant woman · Her brother-in-law Irakli, a bandit · Three farmers · Illo Shaboladze and Sandro Oboladze, lawyers · The very old married couple

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE VALLEY

Among the ruins of a badly shelled Caucasian village the members of two kolchos villages are sitting in a circle, smoking and drinking wine. They consist mainly of women and old men, but there are also a few soldiers among them. With them is an expert of the State Reconstruction Commission from the capital.

A PEASANT WOMAN *left, pointing*: In those hills over there we stopped three Nazi tanks. But the apple orchard had already been destroyed.

AN OLD PEASANT *right*: Our beautiful dairy farm. All in ruins.

A GIRL TRACTOR DRIVER *left*: I set fire to it, Comrade.

Pause.

THE EXPERT: Now listen to the report: the delegates of the Galinsk goat-breeding kolchos arrived in Nukha. When the Hitler armies were approaching, the kolchos had been ordered by the authorities to move its goat-herds further to the east. The kolchos now considers resettling in this valley. Its delegates have investigated the village and the grounds and found a high degree of destruction. *The delegates on the right nod.* The neighbouring Rosa Luxemburg fruit-growing kolchos—to the left—moves that the former grazing land of the Galinsk kolchos, a valley with scanty growth of grass, should be used for the replanting of orchards and vineyards. As an expert of the Reconstruction Commission, I request the two kolchos villages to decide between themselves whether the Galinsk kolchos shall return here or not.

AN OLD MAN *right*: First of all, I want to protest against the restriction of time for discussion. We of the Galinsk kolchos have spent three days and three nights getting here. And now we are allowed a discussion of only half a day.

A WOUNDED SOLDIER *left*: Comrade, we no longer have as many villages and no longer as many working hands and no longer as much time.

THE GIRL TRACTOR DRIVER *left*: All pleasures have to be rationed. Tobacco is rationed, and wine and discussion, too.

THE OLD MAN *right, sighing*: Death to the Fascists! But I will come to the point and explain to you why we want to have our valley back. There are a great many reasons, but I want to begin with one of the simplest. Makinae Abakidze, unpack the goat cheese.

A peasant woman, right, takes from a basket an enormous cheese wrapped in a cloth. Applause and laughter.

Help yourselves, comrades. Start in.

AN OLD PEASANT *left, suspiciously*: Is this meant to influence us, perhaps?

THE OLD MAN *right, amidst laughter*: How could it be meant as an influence, Surab, you valley-thief? Everyone knows that you will take the cheese and the valley, too. *Laughter.* All I expect from you is an honest answer: Do you like the cheese?

THE OLD MAN *left*: The answer is yes.

THE OLD MAN *right*: Oh. *Bitterly.* I might have guessed you know nothing about cheese.

THE OLD MAN *left*: Why not? When I tell you I like it!

THE OLD MAN *right*: Because you can't like it. Because it's not what it was in the old days. And why isn't it? Because our goats don't like the new grass as they used to like the old. Cheese is not cheese because grass is not grass, that's it. Mind you put that in your report.

THE OLD MAN *left*: But your cheese is excellent.

THE OLD MAN *right*: It's not excellent. Barely decent. The new grazing land is no good, whatever the young people may say. I tell you, it's impossible to live there. It doesn't even smell of morning there in the morning.

Several people laugh.

THE EXPERT: Don't mind their laughter. They understand you all the same. Comrades, why does one love one's country? Because the bread tastes better there, the sky is higher, the air smells better, voices sound stronger, the ground is easier to walk on. Isn't that so?

THE OLD MAN *right*: The valley has belonged to us for centuries.

THE SOLDIER *left*: What does that mean—for centuries? Nothing belongs to anyone for centuries. When you were young you didn't even belong to yourself, but to Prince Kazbeki.

THE OLD MAN *right*: According to the law the valley belongs to us.

THE GIRL TRACTOR DRIVER: The laws will have to be re-examined in any case, to see whether they are still valid.

THE OLD MAN *right*: That's obvious. You mean to say it makes no difference what kind of tree stands beside the house where one was born? Or what kind of neighbour one has? Doesn't that make any difference? We want to go back just to have you next door to our kolchos, you valley-thieves. Now you can laugh again.

THE OLD MAN *left, laughing*: Then why don't you listen to what your 'neighbour', Kato Vachtang, our agronomist, has to say about the valley?

A PEASANT WOMAN *right*: We haven't said anywhere near all we have to say about our valley. Not all the houses are destroyed. At least the foundation wall of the dairy farm is still standing.

THE EXPERT: You can claim State support—both here and there. You know that.

A PEASANT WOMAN *right*: Comrade Expert, we're not trading now. I can't take your cap and hand you another, and say: 'This one's better.' The other one might be better, but you prefer yours.

THE GIRL TRACTOR DRIVER: A piece of land is not like a cap. Not in our country, comrade.

THE EXPERT: Don't get angry. It's true that we have to consider a piece of land as a tool with which one produces something useful. But it's also true that we must recognize the love for a particular piece of land. Before we continue the discussion I suggest that you explain to the comrades

of the Galinsk kolchos just what you intend to do with the disputed valley.

THE OLD MAN *right*: Agreed.

THE OLD MAN *left*: Yes, let Kato speak.

THE EXPERT: Comrade Agronomist!

THE AGRONOMIST *rising. She is in military uniform*: Last winter, comrades, while we were fighting here in these hills as partisans, we discussed how after the expulsion of the Germans we could increase our orchards to ten times their former size. I have prepared a plan for an irrigation project. With the help of a dam on our mountain lake, three hundred hectares of unfertile land can be irrigated. Our kolchos could then grow not only more fruit, but wine as well. The project, however, would pay only if the disputed valley of the Galinsk kolchos could also be included. Here are the calculations. *She hands the expert a briefcase.*

THE OLD MAN *right*: Write into the report that our kolchos plans to start a new stud farm.

THE GIRL TRACTOR DRIVER: Comrades, the project was conceived during the days and nights when we had to take cover in the mountains and often were without ammunition for our few rifles. Even to get a pencil was difficult.

Applause from both sides.

THE OLD MAN *right*: Our thanks to the comrades of the Rosa Luxemburg kolchos and to all those who defended our country.

They shake hands and embrace.

THE PEASANT WOMAN *left*: Our thoughts were that our soldiers—both your men and our men—should return to a still more fertile homeland.

THE GIRL TRACTOR DRIVER: As the poet Mayakovsky said: 'The home of the Soviet people shall also be the home of Reason!'

The delegates on the right (except the old man) have risen and, with the expert, study the agronomist's plans. Exclamations such as: 'Why is there a fall of 66 feet?'—'This rock here is to be dynamited!'—'Actually, all they need is cement and dynamite!'—'They force the water to come down here, that's clever!'

A VERY YOUNG WORKMAN *right, to the old man, right*: They are going to irrigate all the fields between the hills—look at that, Alleko.

THE OLD MAN *right*: I am not going to look at it. I knew the project would be good. I won't have a revolver pointed at my chest.

THE SOLDIER: But they are only pointing a pencil at your chest.

Laughter.

THE OLD MAN *right. He gets up gloomily and walks over to look at the drawings*: These valley-thieves know only too well that we can't resist machines and projects in this country.

THE PEASANT WOMAN *right*: Alleko Bereshvili, you yourself are the worst one at new projects. That is well known.

THE EXPERT: What about my report? May I write that in your kolchos you will support the transfer of your old valley for the project?

THE PEASANT WOMAN *right*: I will support it. What about you, Alleko?

THE OLD MAN *right, bent over the drawings*: I move that you give us copies of the drawings to take along.

THE PEASANT WOMAN *right*: Then we can sit down to eat. Once he has the drawings and is ready to discuss them, the affair is settled. I know him. And it will be the same with the rest of us.

The delegates embrace again amidst laughter.

THE OLD MAN *left*: Long live the Galinsk kolchos and good luck to your new stud farm!

THE PEASANT WOMAN *left*: Comrades, in honour of the visit of the delegates from the Galinsk kolchos and of the expert we have arranged a play featuring the singer Arkadi Cheidze, which has some bearing on our problem.

Applause.

The girl tractor driver has gone off to fetch the singer.

THE PEASANT WOMAN *right*: Comrades, your play will have to be good. We're going to pay for it with a valley.

THE PEASANT WOMAN *left*: Arkadi Cheidze knows 21,000 verses by heart.

THE OLD MAN *left*: We rehearsed the play under his direction. It is very difficult to get him, by the way. You and the Planning Commission should see to it that he comes north more often, comrade.

THE EXPERT: We are more concerned with economy.

THE OLD MAN *left, smiling*: You arrange the new distribution of grapevines and tractors. Why not of songs, too?

Enter the singer Arkadi Cheidze, led by the girl tractor driver. He is a sturdy man of simple manners, accompanied by musicians with their instruments. The artistes are greeted with applause.

THE GIRL TRACTOR DRIVER: This is the comrade expert, Arkadi.

The singer greets those round him.

THE PEASANT WOMAN *right*: I am very honoured to make your acquaintance. I've heard about your songs ever since I was at school.

THE SINGER: This time it's a play with songs, and almost the whole kolchos takes part. We have brought along the old masks.

THE OLD MAN *right*: Is it going to be one of the old legends?

THE SINGER: A very old one. It is called 'The Chalk Circle' and is derived from the Chinese. But we will recite it in a changed version. Yura, show the masks. Comrades, we consider it an honour to entertain you after such a difficult debate. We hope you will find that the voice of the old poet also sounds well in the shadow of Soviet tractors. It may be mistaken to mix different wines, but old and new wisdom mix very well. Now I hope we will all be given something to eat before the recital begins. That usually helps.

VOICES: Of course.—Everyone into the club house.

All go cheerfully to the meal. While they begin to move off, the expert turns to the singer.

THE EXPERT: How long will the story take, Arkadi? I have to get back to Tiflis tonight.

THE SINGER *casually*: It is actually two stories. A few hours.

THE EXPERT *very confidentially*: Couldn't you make it shorter?

THE SINGER: No.

2

THE NOBLE CHILD

THE SINGER, *who is seen sitting on the floor in front of his musicians, a black sheepskin cloak round his shoulders, leafing through a small, well-thumbed notebook:*

Once upon a time
 A time of bloodshed
 When this city was called
 The city of the damned
 It had a Governor.
 His name was Georgi Abashvili
 Once upon a time.

He was very rich
 He had a beautiful wife
 He had a healthy child
 Once upon a time.

No other governor in Grusinia
 Had as many horses in his stable
 As many beggars on his doorstep
 As many soldiers in his service
 As many petitioners in his courtyard
 Once upon a time.

Georgi Abashvili, how shall I describe him?
 He enjoyed his life:
 On Easter Sunday morning
 The Governor and his family went to church
 Once upon a time.

Beggars and petitioners stream from a palace gateway, holding up thin children, crutches, and petitions. They are followed by two Ironshirts and then by the Governor's family, elaborately dressed.

THE BEGGARS AND PETITIONERS: Mercy, Your Grace,
 the taxes are beyond our means . . . I lost my leg in the

Persian War, where can I get . . . My brother is innocent, Your Grace, a misunderstanding . . . My child is starving in my arms . . . We plead for our son's discharge from the army, our one remaining son . . . Please, Your Grace, the water inspector is corrupt.

A servant collects the petitions, another distributes coins from a purse. Soldiers push back the crowd, lashing at it with thick leather whips.

SOLDIER: Get back! Make way at the church door!

Behind the Governor, his wife and his Adjutant, the Governor's child is driven through the gateway in an ornate little carriage. The crowd surges forward to see it.

THE SINGER *while the crowd is driven back with whips:*

For the first time on this Easter Sunday, the people see the heir.

Two doctors never leave the child, the noble child
Apple of the Governor's eye.

*Cries from the crowd: 'The child!' . . . 'I can't see it, stop pushing!'
... 'God bless the child, Your Grace!'*

THE SINGER:

Even the mighty Prince Kazbeki
Bows before it at the church door.

A fat prince steps forward and bows before the family.

THE FAT PRINCE: Happy Easter, Natella Abashvili!

A command is heard. A rider arrives at the gallop and holds out to the Governor a roll of documents. At a nod from the Governor the Adjutant, a handsome young man, approaches the rider and stops him. There follows a brief pause during which the fat prince eyes the rider suspiciously.

THE FAT PRINCE: What a magnificent day! While it was raining in the night I thought to myself: gloomy holidays. But this morning: a gay sky. I love a bright sky, a simple heart, Natella Abashvili. And little Michael, a governor from head to foot, tititi! *He tickles the child.* Happy Easter, little Michael, tititi!

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: What do you think of this, Arsen? Georgi has finally decided to start building the new

wing on the east side. All these miserable slum houses are to be torn down to make room for a garden.

THE FAT PRINCE: That's good news after so much bad. What's the latest about the war, Brother Georgi? *The Governor shows his lack of interest.* A strategic retreat, I hear? Well, minor reverses invariably occur. Sometimes things go well, sometimes not so well. Such are the fortunes of war. Doesn't mean much, eh?

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: He's coughing! Georgi, did you hear?

Sharply to the two doctors, dignified men, who stand close to the little carriage: He's coughing!

FIRST DOCTOR *to the second*: May I remind you, Niko Mikadze, that I was against the lukewarm bath? A minor oversight in warming the bath water, Your Grace.

SECOND DOCTOR *equally polite*: I can't possibly agree with you, Mikha Loladze. The temperature of the bath water was the one prescribed by our great and beloved Mishiko Oboladze. More likely a slight draught in the night, Your Grace.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: But do take better care of him. He looks feverish, Georgi.

FIRST DOCTOR *bending over the child*: No cause for alarm, Your Grace. The bath water will be warmer. It won't happen again.

SECOND DOCTOR *with a poisonous glance at the first*: I won't forget it, dear Mikha Loladze. No cause for alarm, Your Grace.

THE FAT PRINCE: Well, well, well! I always say: one pain in my liver and the doctor gets fifty strokes on the soles of his feet. And that's only because we live in such a decadent age. In the old days it would have been: Off with his head!

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Let's go into the church. Very likely it's the draught here.

The procession, consisting of the family and servants, turns into the church doorway. The fat prince follows. The Adjutant leaves the procession and points at the rider.

THE GOVERNOR: Not before divine service, Shalva.

ADJUTANT *to the rider*: The Governor doesn't want to be bothered with reports before the service—especially if they are, as I suspect, of a depressing nature. Go and get yourself something to eat in the kitchen, my friend.

The Adjutant joins the procession while the rider enters the palace gateway, cursing. A soldier appears from the palace and remains standing in the gateway.

THE SINGER

The city lies still.

On the church square the pigeons preen themselves.

A soldier of the palace guard

Is jesting with the kitchen maid

As she comes up from the river with a bundle.

A girl tries to pass through the gateway, a bundle of large green leaves under her arm.

THE SOLDIER: What! The young lady is not in church? Shirking service?

GRUSHA: I was already dressed to go. But they wanted one more goose for the Easter banquet. And they asked me to fetch it. I know something about geese.

THE SOLDIER: A goose? *Feigning suspicion.* I'd like to see that goose.

Grusha doesn't understand.

One has to be on one's guard with women. They say: 'I only went to fetch a goose', and then it turns out to be something quite different.

GRUSHA *walks resolutely towards him and shows him the goose*: There it is. And if it isn't a fifteen-pound goose, and they haven't stuffed it with corn, I'll eat the feathers.

THE SOLDIER: A queen of a goose. It will be eaten by the Governor himself. So the young lady has been down to the river again?

GRUSHA: Yes, at the poultry farm.

THE SOLDIER: I see! At the poultry farm, down by the river. Not higher up, near those—those willows?

GRUSHA: I go to the willows only to wash linen.

THE SOLDIER *insinuatingly*: Exactly.

GRUSHA: Exactly what?

THE SOLDIER *winking*: Exactly that.

GRUSHA: Why shouldn't I wash my linen near the willows?

THE SOLDIER *with exaggerated laughter*: 'Why shouldn't I wash my linen near the willows!' That's a good one, that is!

GRUSHA: I don't understand the soldier. What's so good about it?

THE SOLDIER *slyly*: If someone knew what someone's told, she'd grow hot, she'd grow cold.

GRUSHA: I don't know what I could know about those willows.

THE SOLDIER: Not even if there were a bush opposite? From which everything could be seen? Everything that happens there when a certain person is washing linen?

GRUSHA: What happens there? Won't the soldier say what he means and have done with it?

THE SOLDIER: Something happens. And perhaps something can be seen.

GRUSHA: Could the soldier mean that—once in a while on a hot day—I put my toes in the water? For otherwise there's nothing.

THE SOLDIER: And more—the toes and more.

GRUSHA: More what? At most the foot.

THE SOLDIER: The foot and a little more. *He laughs heartily.*

GRUSHA *angrily*: Simon Chachava, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! To sit in a bush on a hot day and wait till someone comes along and puts her leg in the river! And most likely with another soldier! *She runs off.*

THE SOLDIER *shouting after her*: Not with another soldier!
As the singer resumes his story the soldier runs after Grusha.

THE SINGER

The city lies still, but why are there armed men?
The Governor's palace lies at peace
But why is it a fortress?

From the doorway at the left the fat prince enters quickly. He stands still and looks around. Before the gateway at the right two Ironshirts are waiting. Noticing them, the prince walks slowly past them, signs to them, then exits quickly. One Ironshirt exits through the gateway, the other remains on guard. Muffled voices come from different sides in the rear: 'To your posts!' The palace is surrounded. Distant church bells. Enter through the doorway the procession and the Governor's family returning from church.

THE SINGER

Then the Governor returned to his palace
 Then the fortress was a trap
 Then the goose was plucked and roasted
 Then the goose was no longer eaten
 Then noon was no longer the hour to eat
 Then noon was the hour to die.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *in passing*: It's quite impossible to live in this slum. But Georgi, of course, builds only for his little Michael. Never for me. Michael is everything, everything for Michael!

THE GOVERNOR: Did you hear Brother Kazbeki bid me a 'Happy Easter'? That's all very well, but so far as I know it didn't rain in Nukha last night. It rained where Brother Kazbeki was. Where was Brother Kazbeki?

THE ADJUTANT: That will have to be investigated.

THE GOVERNOR: Yes, at once. Tomorrow.

The procession turns into the gateway. The rider, who has meanwhile returned from the palace, walks towards the Governor.

THE ADJUTANT: Don't you want to listen to the rider from the capital, Your Excellency? He arrived this morning with confidential papers.

THE GOVERNOR *in passing*: Not before the banquet, Shalva!

THE ADJUTANT *to the rider, while the procession disappears into the palace and only two Ironshirts remain at the gate as palace guards*: The Governor doesn't wish to be disturbed by military reports before the banquet. The afternoon His Excellency will devote to conferences with prominent architects who have also been invited to the banquet. Here they are

already. *Enter three men. As the rider goes off, the Adjutant greets the architects.* Gentlemen, His Excellency is awaiting you at the banquet. His entire time will be devoted to you. To the great new plans! Come, let us go!

ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS: We are impressed that his Excellency thinks of building in spite of the disquieting rumours that the war in Persia has taken a turn for the worse.

THE ADJUTANT: All the more reason for building! That's nothing. Persia is far away. The garrison here would let itself be chopped to pieces for its Governor.

Uproar from the palace. Shrill screams of a woman. Orders are shouted. Dumbfounded, the Adjutant moves towards the gateway. An Ironshirt steps out and holds him up at the point of a lance.

What's going on here? Put down that lance, you dog! To the palace guard, *furiously*. Disarm him! Can't you see an attempt is being made on the Governor's life?

The palace guard Ironshirts refuse to obey. Staring coldly, indifferently, at the Adjutant, they watch the proceedings without interest. The Adjutant fights his way into the palace.

ONE OF THE ARCHITECTS: The Princes! Don't you realize that the Princes met last night in the capital? And that they are against the Grand Duke and his governors? Gentlemen, we'd better make ourselves scarce.

They rush off.

THE SINGER

Oh, blindness of the great! They walk like gods
Great over bent backs, sure
Of hired fists, trusting
In their power which has already lasted so long.
But long is not forever.

Oh, Wheel of Fortune! Hope of the people!

From the gateway, enter the Governor with a grey face, manacled, between two soldiers armed to the teeth.

Walk, Your Highness, walk even now with head up.
From your Palace the eyes of many foes follow you!
You no longer need an architect, a carpenter will do.

You will not move into a new palace, but into a little hole
in the ground.

Just look about you once more, you blind man!

The arrested Governor looks about him.

Does all you once possessed still please you? Between the
Easter Mass and the banquet

You are walking to that place from which no one returns.

*The Governor is led away. The palace guard follows. A horn
sounds. Noise behind the gateway.*

When the houses of the great collapse

Many little people are slain.

Those who had no share in the fortunes of the mighty

Often have a share in their misfortunes. The plunging
wain

Drags the sweating beasts with it into the abyss.

Servants come rushing through the gateway in panic.

THE SERVANTS *in confusion*: The hampers!—Take them all
into the third courtyard! Food for five days!—Her Lady-
ship has fainted! Someone must carry her down. She must
get away.—And what about us? We'll be slaughtered like
chickens, it's the old story.—Jesus and Mary, what's going
to happen? There's already bloodshed in the town, they
say.—Nonsense, the Governor has just been asked politely
to appear at a Princes' meeting. Everything'll be all right. I
have this on the best authority.

The two doctors rush into the courtyard.

FIRST DOCTOR *trying to restrain the other*: Niko Mikadze, it is
your duty as a doctor to attend Natella Abashvili.

SECOND DOCTOR: My duty? It's yours!

FIRST DOCTOR: Niko Mikadze, who is in charge of the child
today? You or me?

SECOND DOCTOR: Do you really think, Mikha Loladze, I'm
going to stay another minute in this cursed house for that
little brat?

*They start fighting. All one hears is: 'You neglect your duty!' and
'Duty be damned!' Then the second doctor knocks down the first.*

SECOND DOCTOR: Oh, go to hell! *Exit.*

THE SERVANTS: There's time enough before night. The soldiers won't be drunk till then.—Does anyone know if they've started a mutiny yet?—The Palace Guard has ridden away.—Doesn't anyone know what's happened?

GRUSHA: Meliva the fisherman says a comet with a red tail has been seen in the sky over the capital. That means bad luck.

THE SERVANTS: Yesterday they were saying in the capital that the Persian War is lost.—The Princes have started a great revolt. There's a rumour that the Grand Duke has already fled. All his Governors are to be hanged.—The likes of us will be left alone. I have a brother in the Iron-shirts.

Enter the soldier Simon Chachava, searching the crowd for Grusha.

THE ADJUTANT *appearing in the doorway*: Everyone into the third courtyard! All hands help with the packing!

He drives the servants out. Simon finally finds Grusha.

SIMON: There you are at last, Grusha! What are you going to do?

GRUSHA: Nothing. If the worst comes to the worst, I've a brother with a farm in the mountains. But what about you?

SIMON: Don't worry about me. *Polite again.* Grusha Vachnadze, your desire to know my plans fills me with satisfaction. I've been ordered to accompany Madam Natella Abashvili as her guard.

GRUSHA: But hasn't the Palace Guard mutinied?

SIMON *serious*: That's a fact.

GRUSHA: But isn't it dangerous to accompany the woman?

SIMON: In Tiflis they say: Isn't stabbing dangerous for the knife?

GRUSHA: You're not a knife. You're a man, Simon Chachava. What has this woman to do with you?

SIMON: The woman has nothing to do with me. But I have my orders, and so I go.

GRUSHA: The soldier is a pig-headed man; he gets himself into danger for nothing—nothing at all. *As she is called from the palace*: Now I must go into the third courtyard. I'm in a hurry.

SIMON: As there's a hurry we oughtn't to quarrel. For a good quarrel one needs time. May I ask if the young lady still has parents?

GRUSHA: No, only a brother.

SIMON: As time is short—the second question would be: Is the young lady as healthy as a fish in water?

GRUSHA: Perhaps once in a while a pain in the right shoulder; but otherwise strong enough for any work. So far no one has complained.

SIMON: Everyone knows that. Even if it's Easter Sunday and there's the question who shall fetch the goose, then it's she. The third question is this: Is the young lady impatient? Does she want cherries in winter?

GRUSHA: Impatient, no. But if a man goes to war without any reason, and no message comes, that's bad.

SIMON: A message will come. *Grusha is again called from the palace.* And finally the main question . . .

GRUSHA: Simon Chachava, because I've got to go to the third courtyard and I'm in a hurry, the answer is 'Yes'.

SIMON *very embarrassed*: Hurry, they say, is the wind that blows down the scaffolding. But they also say: The rich don't know what hurry is.—I come from . . .

GRUSHA: Kutsik.

SIMON: So the young lady has already made inquiries? Am healthy, have no dependents, earn ten piastres a month, as a paymaster twenty, and am asking honourably for your hand.

GRUSHA: Simon Chachava, that suits me.

SIMON *taking from his neck a thin chain from which hangs a little cross*: This cross belonged to my mother, Grusha Vachnadze. The chain is silver. Please wear it

GRUSHA: I thank you, Simon. *He fastens it round her neck.*

SIMON: Now I must harness the horses. The young lady will understand that. It would be better for the young lady to go into the third courtyard. Otherwise there'll be trouble.

GRUSHA: Yes, Simon.

They stand together undecided.

SIMON: I'll just take the woman to the troops who've remained loyal. When the war's over, I'll come back. In two weeks. Or three. I hope my intended won't get tired waiting for my return.

GRUSHA: Simon Chachava, I shall wait for you.

Go calmly into battle, soldier
The bloody battle, the bitter battle
From which not everyone returns.
When you return I will be there.
I will be waiting for you under the green elm
I will be waiting for you under the bare elm
I will wait until the last soldier has returned
And even longer.
When you return from the battle
No boots will lie before the door
The pillow beside mine will be empty
My mouth will be unkissed.
When you return, when you return
You will be able to say: all is as it was.

SIMON: I thank you, Grusha Vachnadze, and farewell!

He bows low before her; she bows low before him. Then she runs off without looking round. Enter the Adjutant from the gateway.

THE ADJUTANT *harshly*: Harness the horses to the big carriage! Don't stand there doing nothing, idiot!
Simon Chachava leaps to attention and goes off. Two servants crawl in from the gateway, loaded down with heavy trunks. Behind them, supported by her women, stumbles Natella Abashvili. She is followed by another woman carrying Michael.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: As usual, nobody's paying the slightest attention. I hardly know if I'm standing on my head or my feet. Where's Michael? Don't hold him so clumsily! Pile the trunks on to the carriage! Shalva, is there any news of the Governor?

THE ADJUTANT *shaking his head*: You must get away at once.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Is there any news from the town?

THE ADJUTANT: No. So far all is quiet. But there isn't a minute to lose. There's not enough room for the trunks on the carriage. Please pick out what you need.

Exit the Adjutant quickly.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Only essentials! Quick, open the trunks. I'll tell you what I've got to have.

The trunks are lowered and opened.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *pointing at some brocade dresses*: That green one! And of course that one with the fur trimming. Where are the doctors? I'm getting this terrible migraine again. It always starts in the temples. This one with the little pearl buttons . . . *Enter Grusha*. You're taking your time, eh? Go and get the hot water bottles at once!

Grusha runs off, and returns with hot water bottles. The Governor's wife orders her about by signs.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *watching a young woman attendant*: Don't tear the sleeve!

THE YOUNG WOMAN: I promise you, madam, no harm has come to the dress.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Because I caught you. I've been watching you for a long time. Nothing in your head but making eyes at the Adjutant. I'll kill you, you bitch! *She beats her.*

THE ADJUTANT *returning*: I must ask you to make haste, Natella Abashvili. They are fighting in the town. *Exit the Adjutant.*

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *letting go of the young woman*: My God, do you think they'll do something to me? Why should they? *All are silent. She herself begins to rummage in the trunks.* Where's my brocade jacket? Help me! What about Michael? Is he asleep?

THE NURSE: Yes, madam.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Then put him down a moment and go and fetch my little saffron-coloured slippers from the bed-chamber. I need them to go with the green dress. *The nurse puts down the child and goes off.* To the young woman: Don't

stand around, you! *The young woman runs off.* Stay here, or I'll have you whipped! Just look at the way these things have been packed! No love! No understanding! If one doesn't give every order oneself . . . At such moments one realizes what one's servants are like! Masha! *She gives her an order with a wave of the hand.* You all gorge yourselves, but never a sign of gratitude! I won't forget this.

THE ADJUTANT *very excited*: Natella, you must leave at once! Orbeliani, Judge of the Supreme Court, has just been hanged! The carpet weavers are in revolt!

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Why? I must have the silver dress—it cost 1000 piastres. And that one there, and all my furs. And where's the wine-coloured dress?

THE ADJUTANT *trying to pull her away*: Riots have broken out in the outer town! We've got to leave this minute! *A servant runs off.* Where's the child?

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *to the nurse*: Maro, get the child ready! Where are you?

THE ADJUTANT *leaving*: We'll probably have to do without the carriage. And ride.

The Governor's wife still rummages among her dresses, throws some on to the heap to go with her, then takes them off again. Drums are heard. The sky begins to redden.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *rummaging desperately*: I can't find that wine-coloured dress. *Shrugging her shoulders, to the second woman*: Take the whole heap and carry it to the carriage. Why hasn't Maro come back? Have you all gone off your heads? I told you it's right at the bottom.

THE ADJUTANT *returning*: Quick! Quick!

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *to the second woman*: Run! Just throw them into the carriage!

THE ADJUTANT: We're not going by carriage. Come at once or I'll ride off on my own!

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Maro! Bring the child! *To the second woman*: Go and look, Masha. No, first take the dresses to the carriage. It's all nonsense, I wouldn't dream of riding! *Turning round, she sees the fire-reddened sky and starts*

back in horror. Fire! She rushes off, followed by the Adjutant. The second woman, shaking her head, follows with a heap of dresses. Servants enter from the gateway.

THE COOK: That must be the East Gate that's burning.

THE CHEF: They've gone. And without the food wagon. How are we going to get away now?

A STABLEMAN: This is going to be an unhealthy place for some time. *To the third chambermaid:* Sulika, I'm going to fetch some blankets, we're clearing out.

THE NURSE *entering through the gateway with her mistress's slippers*: Madam!

A FAT WOMAN: She's gone.

THE NURSE: And the child. *She rushes to the child, and picks it up.* They left it behind, those brutes! *She hands the child to Grusha.* Hold it for a moment. *Deceitfully.* I'm going to look for the carriage.

She runs off, following the Governor's wife.

GRUSHA: What have they done to the Governor?

THE STABLEMAN *drawing his index finger across his throat*: Fft.

THE FAT WOMAN *seeing the gesture, becomes hysterical*: Oh God! Oh God! Oh God! Our master Georgi Abashvili! At morning Mass he was a picture of health! And now! Oh, take me away! We're all lost! We must die in sin! Like our master, Georgi Abashvili!

THE THIRD WOMAN *trying to calm her*: Calm down, Nina. You'll get away. You've done no one any harm.

THE FAT WOMAN *being led out*: Oh God! Oh God! Oh God! Let's all get out before they come! Before they come!

THE THIRD WOMAN: Nina takes it to heart more than the mistress. People like that get others even to do their weeping for them! *Seeing the child in Grusha's arms.* The child! What are you doing with it?

GRUSHA: It's been left behind.

THE THIRD WOMAN: She just left it? Michael, who was never allowed to be in a draught!

The servants gather round the child.

GRUSHA: He's waking up.

THE STABLEMAN: Better put him down, I tell you. I'd rather not think what'd happen to the person seen with that child. I'll get our things. You wait here. *Exit into the palace.*

THE COOK: He's right. Once they begin, they'll slaughter whole families. I'll go and fetch my belongings.

All go except the cook, the third woman and Grusha with the child in her arms.

THE THIRD WOMAN: Didn't you hear? Better put him down!

GRUSHA: The nurse asked me to hold him for a moment.

THE COOK: That one won't come back, you silly!

THE THIRD WOMAN: Keep your hands off him.

THE COOK: They'll be more after him than after his mother.

He's the heir. Grusha, you're a good soul. But you know you're not too bright. I tell you, if he had the plague it couldn't be worse. Better see to it that you get away.

The stableman has come back carrying bundles which he distributes among the women. All except Grusha prepare to leave.

GRUSHA *stubbornly*: He hasn't got the plague. He looks at you like a human being.

THE COOK: Then don't you look back. You're just the kind of fool who always gets put upon. If someone says to you: Run and get the lettuce, you have the longest legs!—you run. We're taking the ox-cart, you can have a lift if you hurry. Jesus, by now the whole neighbourhood must be in flames!

THE THIRD WOMAN: Haven't you packed anything yet? There isn't much time, you know. The Ironshirts will soon be here from the barracks.

Exit both women and the stableman.

GRUSHA: I'm coming.

Grusha lays the child down, looks at it for a moment, then takes clothes from the trunks lying about and covers the sleeping child. Then she runs into the palace to get her things. Sounds of horses' hoofs and of women screaming. Enter the fat prince with drunken Ironshirts. One of them carries the head of the Governor on a lance.

THE FAT PRINCE: Put it here. Right in the middle! *One Iron-shirt climbs on to the back of another, takes the head and holds it*

over the gateway. That's not the middle. Further to the right. Good. What I do, my friends, I do well. *While an Ironshirt with hammer and nail fastens the head by its hair:* This morning at the church door I said to Georgi Abashvili: 'I love a clear sky'. Actually, what I prefer is lightning from a clear sky. Oh, yes. But it's a pity they took the brat away. I need him. Badly. Search the whole of Grusinia for him! 1000 piastres reward!

As Grusha enters cautiously through the doorway, the fat prince and the Ironshirts leave. Trampling of horses' hoofs again. Carrying a bundle, Grusha walks towards the gateway. At the last moment, she turns to see if the child is still there. Promptly the singer begins to sing. She stands rooted to the spot.

THE SINGER

As she was standing between courtyard and gate, she
heard

Or thought she heard, a low voice. The child
Called to her, not whining but calling quite sensibly
At least so it seemed to her: 'Woman', it said, 'Help me'.
Went on calling not whining but calling quite sensibly:
'Don't you know, woman, that she who does not listen to
a cry for help

But passes by shutting her ears, will never hear
The gentle call of a lover
Nor the blackbird at dawn, nor the happy
Sigh of the exhausted grape-picker at the sound of the
Angelus.'

Hearing this

Grusha walks a few steps towards the child and bends over it.

she went back to the child

Just for one more look, just to sit with it
For a moment or two till someone should come
Its mother, perhaps, or someone else—

She sits down opposite the child, and leans against a trunk.

Just for a moment before she left, for now the danger was
too great

The city full of flame and grief.

The light grows dimmer as though evening and night were falling, Grusha has gone into the palace and fetched a lamp and some milk, which she gives the child to drink.

THE SINGER *loudly*:

Terrible is the temptation to do good!
Grusha now settles down to keep watch over the child through the night. Once, she lights a small lamp to look at it. Once, she tucks it in with a brocade coat. Now and again she listens and looks up to see if someone is coming.

For a long time she sat with the child.
Evening came, night came, dawn came.
Too long she sat, too long she watched
The soft breathing, the little fists
Till towards morning the temptation grew too strong.
She rose, she leaned over, she sighed, she lifted the child
She carried it off.
She does what the singer says as he describes it.
Like booty she took it for herself
Like a thief she sneaked away.

3

THE FLIGHT INTO THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS

THE SINGER

As Grusha Vachnadze left the city
On the Grusinian highway
Towards the northern mountains
She sang a song, she bought some milk.

THE MUSICIANS

How will the merciful escape the merciless
The bloodhounds, the trappers?
Into the deserted mountains she wandered
Along the Grusinian highway she wandered
She sang a song, she bought some milk.
Grusha Vachnadze continues on her way. On her back she carries the child in a sack, in one hand a bundle, in the other a big stick.

GRUSHA *singing*:

Four generals set off for Iran
 Four generals but not one man.
 The first did not strike a blow
 The second did not beat the foe
 For the third the weather was not right
 For the fourth the soldiers would not fight.
 Four generals went forth to attack
 Four generals turned back.

Sosso Robakidse marched to Iran
 Sosso Robakidse was a man.
 He struck a sturdy blow
 He certainly beat the foe
 For him the weather was good enough
 For him the soldiers fought with love
 Sosso Robakidse marched to Iran
 Sosso Robakidse is our man.

A peasant's cottage appears.

GRUSHA *to the child*: Noontime, eating time. Now we'll sit here quietly in the grass, while the good Grusha goes and buys a little mug of milk. *She lays the child down and knocks at the cottage door. An old peasant opens it.* Grandpa, could I have a little mug of milk? And perhaps a corn cake?

THE OLD MAN: Milk? We haven't any milk. The soldiers from the city took our goats. If you want milk, go to the soldiers.

GRUSHA: But Grandpa, you surely have a mug of milk for a child?

THE OLD MAN: And for a 'God Bless You', eh?

GRUSHA: Who said anything about a 'God Bless You'? *She pulls out her purse.* We're going to pay like princes. Head in the clouds, bottom in the water! *The peasant goes off grumbling to fetch milk.* And how much is this mug?

THE OLD MAN: Three piastres. Milk has gone up.

GRUSHA: Three piastres for that drop? *Without a word the old man slams the door in her face.* Michael, did you hear that?

Three piastres! We can't afford that. *She goes back, sits down again and gives the child her breast.* Well, we must try again like this. Suck. Think of the three piastres. There's nothing there, but you think you're drinking, and that's something. *Shaking her head, she realizes the child has stopped sucking. She gets up, walks back to the door, and knocks again.* Open, Grandpa, we'll pay. *Under her breath:* May God strike you! *When the old man appears again:* I thought it would be half a piastre. But the child must have something. What about one piastre?

THE OLD MAN: Two.

GRUSHA: Don't slam the door again. *She rummages a long time in her purse.* Here are two piastres. But this milk has got to last. We still have a long journey ahead of us. These are cut-throat prices. It's a sin.

THE OLD MAN: If you want milk, kill the soldiers.

GRUSHA *letting the child drink:* That's an expensive joke. Drink, Michael. This is half a week's pay. The people here think we've earned our money sitting on our bottom. Michael, Michael, I certainly took on a nice burden with you! *Looking at the brocade coat in which the child is wrapped:* A brocade coat worth 1000 piastres, and not one piastre for milk. *She glances round.* Look! There's a carriage, with rich ladies. We ought to get on to that.

In front of a caravansary. Grusha dressed in the brocade coat is seen approaching two elegant ladies. She holds the child in her arms.

GRUSHA: Oh, you ladies want to spend the night here, too? It's awful how crowded it is everywhere! And not a carriage to be found! My coachman simply turned back. I've been walking half a mile on foot. Barefoot, too! My Persian shoes—you know those heels! But why doesn't someone come?

THE ELDER LADY: That innkeeper certainly takes his time. The whole country has lost its manners since those goings-on started in the capital.

The innkeeper appears, a very dignified old man with a long beard, followed by his servant.

THE INNKEEPER: Excuse an old man for keeping you waiting, ladies. My little grandchild was showing me a peach tree in blossom. There on the slope, beyond the cornfields. We're planting fruit trees there, a few cherries. Further west—*pointing*—the ground gets more stony. That's where the farmers graze their sheep. You ought to see the peach blossom, the pink is exquisite.

THE ELDER LADY: You live in a fertile region.

THE INNKEEPER: God has blessed it. How far on is the fruit-blossom further south, my ladies? I take it you come from the south?

THE YOUNGER LADY: I must admit I haven't been paying much attention to the landscape.

THE INNKEEPER *politely*: Of course, the dust. It is advisable to travel slowly on our high roads. Provided, of course, one isn't in too great a hurry.

THE ELDER LADY: Put your scarf round your throat, dearest. The evening breeze seems rather cool here.

THE INNKEEPER: It comes down from the Janga-Tau glaciers, my ladies.

GRUSHA: Yes, I'm afraid my son may catch cold.

THE ELDER LADY: A very spacious caravansary! Shall we go in?

THE INNKEEPER: Oh, the ladies want rooms? But the caravansary is full up, my ladies. And the servants have run off. I very much regret it, but I cannot accommodate another person, not even with references . . .

THE YOUNGER LADY: But we can't spend the night here on the road.

THE ELDER LADY *drily*: How much?

THE INNKEEPER: My ladies, you will understand that in these times, when so many fugitives, no doubt quite respectable people but not popular with the authorities, are looking for shelter, a house has to be particularly careful. Therefore . . .

THE ELDER LADY: My dear man, we aren't fugitives. We're simply moving to our summer residence in the mountains,

that's all. It would never occur to us to ask for hospitality if we needed it—all that urgently.

THE INNKEEPER *nodding his head in agreement*: Of course not. I only doubt if the tiny room at my disposal would suit the ladies. I have to charge 60 piastres per person. Are the ladies together?

GRUSHA: In a way. I'm also in need of shelter.

THE YOUNGER LADY: 60 piastres! That's a cut-throat price.

THE INNKEEPER *coldly*: My ladies, I have no desire to cut throats. That's why . . . *He turns to go.*

THE ELDER LADY: Must we talk about throats? Let's go in. *She enters, followed by the servant.*

THE YOUNGER LADY *desperate*: 180 piastres for one room! *Glancing back at Grusha*: But with the child it's impossible! What if it cries?

THE INNKEEPER: The room costs 180, whether it's two persons or three.

THE YOUNGER LADY *changing her attitude to Grusha*: On the other hand, I couldn't bear to think of you on the road, my dear. Do come in.

They enter the caravansary. From the rear on the opposite side of the stage the servant appears with some luggage. Behind him come the elder lady, the younger lady and Grusha with the child.

THE YOUNGER LADY: 180 piastres! I haven't been so upset since they brought dear Igor home.

THE ELDER LADY: Must you talk about Igor?

THE YOUNGER LADY: Actually, we are four persons. The child is one too, isn't it? *To Grusha*: Couldn't you pay half at least?

GRUSHA: That's impossible. I had to leave in a hurry, you see. And the Adjutant forgot to slip me enough money.

THE ELDER LADY: Perhaps you haven't even got the 60?

GRUSHA: That much I'll pay.

THE YOUNGER LADY: Where are the beds?

THE SERVANT: There aren't any beds. Here are some sacks and blankets. You'll have to arrange them yourselves. Be

glad you're not being put in a hole in the earth. Like lots of others. *Exit.*

THE YOUNGER LADY: Did you hear that? I'm going straight to the innkeeper. That man must be whipped.

THE ELDER LADY: Like your husband?

THE YOUNGER LADY: Don't be so cruel! *She weeps.*

THE ELDER LADY: How are we going to arrange something to sleep on?

GRUSHA: I'll see to that. *She puts down the child.* It's always easier when there are several hands. You still have the carriage. *Sweeping the floor.* I was taken completely by surprise. 'My dear Anastasia Katarinovska,' my husband was saying before luncheon, 'do go and lie down for a while. You know how easily you get your migraine.' *She spreads out sacks and makes beds. The ladies, watching her work, exchange glances.* 'Georgi', said I to the Governor, 'I can't lie down when there are sixty for luncheon. And one can't trust the servants. And Michael Georgivich won't eat without me.' *To Michael:* See, Michael? Everything'll be all right, what did I tell you! *She suddenly realizes that the ladies are watching her strangely and whispering.* Well, there we are! At least one doesn't have to lie on the bare floor. I've folded the blankets double.

THE ELDER LADY *imperiously*: You seem to be rather clever at making beds, my dear. Let's have a look at your hands!

GRUSHA *frightened*: What?

THE YOUNGER LADY: You're being asked to show your hands.

Grusha shows the ladies her hands.

THE YOUNGER LADY *triumphant*: Cracked! A servant!

THE ELDER LADY *goes to the door and shouts*: Service!

THE YOUNGER LADY: You're caught! You swindler! Just confess what mischief you're up to!

GRUSHA *confused*: I'm not up to any mischief. I just thought you might take us a little way in your carriage. Please, I ask you, don't make a noise, I'll go on my own.

THE YOUNGER LADY *while the elder lady continues shouting for service*: Yes, you'll go all right, but with the police. For the moment you'll stay. Don't you dare move, you!

GRUSHA: But I was ready to pay the 60 piastres. Here. *She shows her purse*. Look for yourself. I have them. Here are four tens, and here's a five—no, that's another ten, and ten, makes 60. All I want is to get the child on to the carriage. That's the truth.

THE YOUNGER LADY: Aha, so that's what you want. On to the carriage! Now it's come out.

GRUSHA: Madam, I confess, I am from a humble family. Please don't call the police. The child is of noble birth, look at the linen. It's fleeing like yourself.

THE YOUNGER LADY: Of noble birth! We know that one. The father's a prince, eh?

GRUSHA *to the elder lady, fiercely*: Stop shouting! Have you no heart at all?

THE YOUNGER LADY *to the elder lady*: Look out! She'll attack you! She's dangerous! Help! Murder!

THE SERVANT *entering*: What's going on here?

THE ELDER LADY: This person here has smuggled herself in by playing the lady. She's probably a thief.

THE YOUNGER LADY: And a dangerous one, too. She wanted to murder us. It's a case for the police. Oh God, I can feel my migraine coming on!

THE SERVANT: There aren't any police at the moment. *To Grusha*: Pack up your things, sister, and make yourself scarce.

GRUSHA *angrily picking up the child*: You monsters! And they're already nailing your heads to the wall!

THE SERVANT *pushing her out*: Shut your trap. Or you'll have the Old Man here. And there's no trifling with him.

THE ELDER LADY *to the younger lady*: Just see if she hasn't stolen something already!

While the ladies, right, look feverishly to see whether something has been stolen, the servant and Grusha go out through the door, left.

THE SERVANT: Look before you leap, I say. Another time have a good look at people before you get mixed up with them.

GRUSHA: I thought they'd be more likely to treat their own kind better.

THE SERVANT: Not them! Believe me, nothing's harder than aping a lazy useless person. Once they suspect you can wipe your own arse, or that your hands have ever touched a broom, the game's up. Just wait a minute, I'll get you a corn cake and a few apples.

GRUSHA: Better not. I must get out before the Old Man comes. And if I walk all night I'll be out of danger, I think.
She walks away.

THE SERVANT *calling after her in a low voice*: At the next crossroads, turn right.
She disappears.

THE SINGER:

As Grusha Vachnadze wandered northwards
She was followed by the Prince's Ironshirts.

THE MUSICIANS

How will the barefooted girl escape the Ironshirts
The bloodhounds, the trappers?
They are hunting even by night.
Pursuers don't get tired.
Butchers sleep little.

Two Ironshirts are trudging along the highway.

THE CORPORAL: Blockhead, you'll never amount to anything. Why? Because your heart's not in it. Your superior sees it in little things. Yesterday when I laid that fat woman, I admit you collared her husband as I commanded. And you did kick him in the stomach. But did you enjoy it like a good soldier? Or did you just do it from a sense of duty? I've kept my eyes on you, blockhead. You're like a hollow reed or a tinkling cymbal. You'll never get promoted. *They walk awhile in silence.* Don't you get the idea I don't notice how insubordinate you are in every way. I forbid you to limp! You do it simply because I sold the horses, and I

sold them because I'd never have got that price again.
I know you: you limp just to show me you don't like
marching. But that won't help you. It'll go against you.
Sing!

THE TWO IRONSHIRTS *singing*:

O sadly one morning, one morning in May
I kissed my darling and rode far away.
Protect her, dear friends, until home from the wars
I come riding in triumph, alive on my horse.

THE CORPORAL: Louder!

THE TWO IRONSHIRTS:

When I lie in my grave and my sword turns to rust
My darling shall bring me a handful of dust.
For the feet that so gaily ran up to her door
And the arms that went round her shall please her no
more.

They begin to walk again in silence.

THE CORPORAL: A good soldier has his heart and soul in it.
He lets himself be hacked to pieces by his superiors, and
even while dying he's aware of his Corporal nodding ap-
proval. For him that's reward enough. That's all he wants.
But *you* won't get a nod. And you'll croak just the same.
Christ, how am I to lay my hands on the Governor's
bastard with an ass like you!

They trudge on.

THE SINGER

When Grusha Vachnadze came to the River Sirra
The flight grew too much for her, the helpless child too
heavy.

THE MUSICIANS

The rosy dawn in the cornfields
Is nothing but cold to the sleepless.
The gay clatter of the milk cans in the farmyard
Where the smoke rises is nothing but a threat to the
fugitives.

She who drags the child feels nothing but its weight.

Grusha stops in front of a farm.

GRUSHA: Now you've wetted yourself again, and you know I've no nappies. Michael, we've got to part. This is far enough from the city. They won't want you so badly, little squirt, that they'll follow you all this way. The woman looks kind, and just you smell the milk! So farewell, little Michael. I'll forget how you kicked me in the back all night to make me go faster. And you—you forget the meagre fare. It was meant well. I'd love to have kept you, because your nose is so small, but it can't be done. I'd have shown you your first rabbit and—how not to wet yourself, but I must turn back, because my sweetheart the soldier might soon return, and suppose he didn't find me? You can't ask that of me, Michael.

A fat peasant woman carries a milk can to the door. Grusha waits until she has gone in, then gingerly approaches the house. She tiptoes to the door and lays the child on the threshold. Then, hiding behind a tree, she waits until the peasant woman opens the door and sees the bundle.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: Jesus Christ, what's this? Husband!

THE PEASANT: What's up? Let me have my soup.

THE PEASANT WOMAN *to the child*: Where's your mother?

Haven't you got one? It's a boy. And the linen is fine; it's from a good family. And they just leave him on our doorstep. Oh, what times we live in!

THE PEASANT: If they think we're going to feed it, they're mistaken. You take it to the priest in the village. That's all we can do.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: What will the priest do with it? It needs a mother. There, it's waking up. Don't you think we could keep it?

THE PEASANT *shouting*: No!

THE PEASANT WOMAN: I could lay it in the corner, next to the armchair. I only need a crib for it. And I can take it into the fields with me. Look how it's smiling! Husband, we have a roof over our heads and we can do it. I won't hear another word.

She carries the child into the house. The peasant follows, protesting.

Grusha steps out from behind the tree, laughs, and hurries away in the opposite direction.

THE SINGER

Why so gay, you, making for home?

THE MUSICIANS

Because with a smile the child
Has won new parents for himself, that's why I'm gay.
Because I am rid of the loved one
That's why I'm happy.

THE SINGER

And why are you sad?

THE MUSICIANS

I'm sad because I'm single and free
Of the little burden in whom a heart was beating:
Like one robbed, like one impoverished I'm going.
Grusha walks for a short while, then meets the two Ironshirts, who hold her up at the point of a lance.

THE CORPORAL: Young lady, you're running into the Armed Forces. Where are you coming from? When are you coming? Are you entertaining illegal relations with the enemy? Where is he hiding? What sort of movements is he making in your rear? What about the hills? What about the valley? How are your stockings fastened?

Grusha stands there frightened.

GRUSHA: They are strongly fastened; you'd better withdraw.

THE CORPORAL: I always withdraw. In that respect I'm reliable. Why are you staring like that at the lance? In the field a soldier never loses control of his lance. That's an order. Learn it by heart, blockhead. Now then, young lady, where are you off to?

GRUSHA: To my intended, one Simon Chachava, of the Palace Guard in Nukha. Wait till I write to him; he'll break your bones for you.

THE CORPORAL: Simon Chachava? Indeed! I know him. He gave me the key so I could keep an eye on you once in a while. Blockhead, we're getting unpopular. We must make her realize we have honourable intentions. Young lady, my

apparent flippancy hides a serious nature. So I'll tell you officially: I want a child from you.

Grusha utters a little scream.

Blockhead, she has understood. Ooh, isn't that a sweet fright! 'But first I must take the bread out of the oven, Officer! But first I must change my torn chemise, Colonel!' But joking apart. Listen, young lady, we are looking for a certain child in these parts. Have you heard of a child from the city, of good family, dressed in fine linen?

GRUSHA: No. I've heard nothing.

THE SINGER

Run, kind heart! The killers are coming!

Help the helpless child, helpless girl! And so she runs.

Suddenly, panic-stricken, she turns round and runs. The Ironshirts glance at each other, then follow her, cursing.

THE MUSICIANS

In the bloodiest times

There are still good people.

As Grusha enters the cottage, the peasant woman is bending over the child's crib.

GRUSHA: Hide it! Quick! The Ironshirts are coming! It was I who laid it on your doorstep. But it isn't mine. It's of a noble family.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: Who's coming? What sort of Ironshirts?

GRUSHA: Don't ask questions. The Ironshirts who are looking for it.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: They've no business in my house. But it seems I must have a word with you.

GRUSHA: Take off the fine linen. That will give us away.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: Oh, you and your linen! In this house I decide. And don't you mess up my room. But why did you abandon it? That's a sin.

GRUSHA *looking out of the window*: There, they're coming from behind the trees. I shouldn't have run away. That gave them ideas. What on earth shall I do?

THE PEASANT WOMAN *looking out of the window and suddenly starting with fear*: Jesus and Mary! Ironshirts!

GRUSHA: They're after the child!

THE PEASANT WOMAN: But suppose they come in!

GRUSHA: You mustn't give it to them. Say it's yours.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: Yes.

GRUSHA: They'll run it through if you let them have it.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: But suppose they demand it? The money for the harvest is in the house.

GRUSHA: If you let them have it, they'll run it through, here in your room! You've got to say it's yours.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: Yes, but suppose they don't believe me?

GRUSHA: You must speak firmly.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: They'll burn the roof over our head.

GRUSHA: That's why you've got to say it's yours. His name's Michael. I shouldn't have told you that.

The peasant woman nods.

Don't nod your head like that. And don't tremble; they'll notice.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: Yes.

GRUSHA: Stop saying yes. I can't stand it any longer. *She shakes her.* Haven't you got a child?

THE PEASANT WOMAN *muttering*: In the war.

GRUSHA: Then perhaps he's an Ironshirt, too, by now? And what if he ran children through? You'd give him a fine piece of your mind! 'Stop waving that lance in my room! Is that what I've reared you for? Go and wash your neck before you speak to your mother.'

THE PEASANT WOMAN: That's true, I wouldn't let him behave like that.

GRUSHA: Promise me you'll say it's yours.

THE PEASANT WOMAN: Yes

GRUSHA: There! They're coming!

There is a knocking at the door. The women don't answer. Enter the Ironshirts. The peasant woman bows deeply.

THE CORPORAL: Well, there she is. What did I tell you? My nose. I smelled her. Young lady, I have a question to ask you: Why did you run away? What did you think I would do to you? I'll bet it was something lewd. Confess!

GRUSHA *while the peasant woman continues to bow*: I'd left the milk on the stove. Then I suddenly remembered it.

THE CORPORAL: I thought it was because you imagined I'd looked at you in a lewd way—as if I were thinking there could be something between us. A lustful glance, know what I mean?

GRUSHA: I didn't see that.

THE CORPORAL: But it could have been, eh? You must admit that. After all, I could be a swine. I'm quite frank with you: I could think of all sorts of things if we were alone. *To the peasant woman*: Haven't you got something to do in the yard? The chickens to feed?

THE PEASANT WOMAN *falling suddenly to her knees*: Soldier, I didn't know anything about it. Please don't set my house on fire.

THE CORPORAL: What are you talking about?

THE PEASANT WOMAN: I have nothing to do with it. She left it on the doorstep, I swear.

THE CORPORAL *suddenly sees the child and whistles*: Ah, there's a little one in the crib! Blockhead, I smell a thousand piastres. Take the old girl out and hold on to her. It looks as though I'll have to do some cross-examining.

The peasant woman lets herself be led out by the soldier, without a word.

Well, there's the child I wanted to have from you. *He walks towards the crib.*

GRUSHA: Officer, it's mine. It's not the one you're after.

THE CORPORAL: I'll just have a look at it. *He bends over the crib. Grusha looks round in despair.*

GRUSHA: It's mine! It's mine!

THE CORPORAL: Nice linen!

Grusha jumps at him to pull him away. He throws her off and again bends over the crib. Looking round in despair, she suddenly

sees a big log of wood, seizes it in panic, and hits the Corporal over the head from behind. She quickly picks up the child and dashes off

THE SINGER

After her escape from the Ironshirts
After twenty-two days of wandering
At the foot of the Janga-Tau glacier
From this moment Grusha Vachnadze decided to be the
child's mother.

THE MUSICIANS

The helpless girl
Became the mother of the helpless child.
*Grusha squats over a half-frozen stream to ladle some water in her
hand for the child.*

GRUSHA

Nobody wants to take you
So I shall have to take you
There is no-one else but me, my dear
On this black day in a meagre year
Who will not forsake you.

Since I've carried you too long
And with sore feet
Since the milk was too dear
I grew fond of you.
(I wouldn't be without you any more.)

I'll throw your fine little shirt away
And wrap you in rags
I'll wash you and christen you
With glacier water.
(You'll have to bear it.)

She has taken off the child's fine linen and wrapped it in a rag.

THE SINGER

When Grusha Vachnadze, pursued by the Ironshirts
Came to the narrow footbridge of the Eastern slope
She sang the song of the rotten bridge
And risked two lives.

A wind has risen. The bridge on the glacier is visible in the semi-darkness. One rope is broken, and half the bridge is hanging down the precipice. Merchants, two men and a woman, stand undecided before the bridge as Grusha and the child arrive. One man is trying to retrieve a hanging rope with a stick.

THE FIRST MAN: Take your time, young woman. You won't get over that pass anyway.

GRUSHA: But I simply have to get my child over to the east side. To my brother.

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: Have to? What d'you mean by have to? I have to get there, too—because I have to buy two carpets in Atum—carpets a woman had to sell because her husband had to die. But can I do what I have to; can she? Andrei has been fishing for two hours for that rope. And I ask you, how are we to fasten it, even if he gets it?

THE FIRST MAN *listening*: Shush, I think I hear something.

GRUSHA: The bridge is not quite rotten. I think I'll try and cross it.

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: I wouldn't try that even if the devil himself were after me. It's suicide

THE FIRST MAN *shouting*: Hi!

GRUSHA: Don't shout! *To the merchant woman.* Tell him not to shout.

THE FIRST MAN: But someone down there's calling. Perhaps they've lost their way.

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: And why shouldn't he shout? Is there something wrong with you? Are they after you?

GRUSHA: Well, I'll have to tell you. Ironshirts are after me. I knocked one down.

THE SECOND MAN: Hide our merchandise!

The woman hides a sack behind a rock.

THE FIRST MAN: Why didn't you tell us that at once? *To the other*: If they catch her they'll make mincemeat out of her!

GRUSHA: Get out of my way. I've got to cross that bridge.

THE SECOND MAN: You can't. There's a precipice of two thousand feet.

THE FIRST MAN: Even if we could get the rope it wouldn't make sense. We could hold it with our hands, but then the Ironshirts could get across in the same way.

GRUSHA: Out of my way.

Shouts from a distance: 'Let's get up there!'

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: They're getting near. But you can't take the child across that bridge. It's sure to break. Just look down!

Grusha looks down the precipice. The Ironshirts are heard shouting below.

THE SECOND MAN: Two thousand feet!

GRUSHA: But those men are worse.

THE FIRST MAN: Anyway you can't do it with the child. Risk your own life if they are after you, but not the child's.

THE SECOND MAN: She's even heavier with the child.

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: Perhaps she's really got to go. Give it to me. I'll hide it and you cross the bridge alone.

GRUSHA: I won't. We belong together. *To the child:* Live together, die together. *She sings:*

If the gulf is deep
And the rotten bridge sways
It is not for us, son
To choose our ways.

The way that I know
Is the one for your feet
The bread that I find
Is all you will eat.

Of every four morsels
You shall have three.
I would that I knew
How big they will be!

I'll try it.

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: That's tempting God.

Shouts from beneath.

GRUSHA: I beg you, throw that stick away, or they'll get the rope and follow me.

She starts off on to the swinging bridge. The merchant woman screams when the bridge looks like breaking. But Grusha walks on and reaches the far side.

THE FIRST MAN: She's done it!

THE MERCHANT WOMAN *who has fallen on her knees and begun to pray, angrily*: But I still think it was a sin.

The Ironshirts appear, the Corporal's head bandaged.

THE CORPORAL: Have you seen a woman with a child?

THE FIRST MAN *while the second throws away his stick*: Yes, there she is! But the bridge won't carry you!

THE CORPORAL: Blockhead, you'll suffer for this!

Grusha, from the far bank, laughs and shows the child to the Ironshirts. She walks on. The bridge is left behind. Wind.

GRUSHA *to the child*: You mustn't mind the wind. It's only a poor wretch, too. It has to push the clouds, and it feels the cold more than any of us. *Snow starts falling.* And the snow isn't the worst, Michael. It covers the little fir trees, so that they won't die in winter. And now I'll sing you a little song. Listen! *She sings*:

Your father's a thief
Your mother's a whore:
All the nice people
Will love you therefore.

The son of the tiger
Brings the foals their feed
The snake-child milk
To mothers in need.

4

IN THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS

THE SINGER

Seven days the sister wandered.
 Across the glacier, down the hills she wandered.
 'When I enter my brother's house', she thought to herself
 'He will rise and embrace me'.
 'Is that you, sister?' he will say
 'I have been expecting you for so long. This here is my
 dear wife.
 And this is my farm, come to me by marriage.
 With eleven horses and thirty-one cows. Sit down.
 Sit down with your child at our table and eat.'
 The brother's house was in a lovely valley.
 When the sister came to the brother she was ill from her
 wanderings.

The brother rose from the table.

A fat peasant couple who have just sat down to a meal. Lavrenti Vachnadze already has a napkin round his neck, as Grusha, pale and supported by a stableman, enters with the child.

LAVRENTI: Where do you come from, Grusha?

GRUSHA *feebly*: I've walked across the Janga-Tau Pass, Lavrenti.

STABLEMAN: I found her in front of the hay barn. She has a child with her.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Go and groom the roan. *Exit stableman.*

LAVRENTI: This is my wife, Aniko.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: We thought you were in service in Nukha.

GRUSHA *barely able to stand*: Yes, I was there.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Wasn't it a good job? We were told it was a good one.

GRUSHA: The Governor has been killed.

LAVRENTI: Yes, we heard there were riots. Your aunt told us about it. Remember, Aniko?

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Here, with us, it's quiet. City people always need some kind of excitement. *She walks towards the door and shouts:* Sosso, Sosso, take the flat cake out of the oven, d'you hear? Where are you? *Exit, shouting.*

LAVRENTI *quietly, quickly*: Has it got a father? *As she shakes her head:* I thought so. We must think up something. She's very pious.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW *returning*: These servants! *To Grusha:* You have a child?

GRUSHA: It's mine. *She collapses. Lavrenti helps her up.*

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Mary and Joseph, she's ill—what are we to do?

Lavrenti tries to lead Grusha to the bench by the stove. Aniko waves her away in horror and points to the sack by the wall.

LAVRENTI *escorting her to the wall*: Sit down, sit down. I think it's just weakness.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: As long as it's not scarlet fever.

LAVRENTI: Then she'd have spots. I'm sure it's only weakness. Don't worry, Aniko. *To Grusha:* Do you feel better sitting?

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Is the child hers?

GRUSHA: It's mine.

LAVRENTI: She's on her way to her husband.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Really? Your meat's getting cold. *Lavrenti sits down and begins to eat.* Cold food's not good for you. At least the fat parts mustn't get cold; you know your stomach's your weak spot. *To Grusha:* If your husband's not in town, where is he then?

LAVRENTI: She got married on the other side of the mountain, she says.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Oh, on the other side. *She also sits down to eat.*

GRUSHA: I think I'll have to lie down somewhere, Lavrenti.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW *goes on questioning her*: If it's consumption we'll all get it. Has your husband a farm?

GRUSHA: He's a soldier.

LAVRENTI: But he's coming into a farm—a small farm from his father.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Isn't he in the war? Why not?

GRUSHA *wearily*: Yes, he's in the war.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: Then why d'you want to go to the farm?

LAVRENTI: When he comes back from the war, he'll come to his farm.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: But you're going there now?

LAVRENTI: Yes, to wait for him.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW *shrilly*: Sosso, the cake!

GRUSHA *murmurs in fever*: A farm—a soldier—waiting—sit down—eat.

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: That's scarlet fever.

GRUSHA *starting up*: Yes, he has a farm!

LAVRENTI: I think it must be weakness, Aniko. Wouldn't you like to go and look after the cake yourself, my dear?

THE SISTER-IN-LAW: But when will he come back if the war, as they say, has broken out again? *Waddling away, shouting*: Sosso! Where are you? Sosso!

LAVRENTI *getting up quickly and going to Grusha*: You'll get a bed in a moment. She has a good heart. But only after supper.

GRUSHA *holding out the child to him*: Take it. *He takes it, looking anxiously round.*

LAVRENTI: But you can't stay here long. You must realize she's very pious.

Grusha collapses. Lavrenti takes hold of her.

THE SINGER

The sister was too ill.

The cowardly brother had to give her shelter.

The autumn passed, the winter came.

The winter was long

The winter was short.

The people mustn't know.

The rats mustn't bite

The spring mustn't come.

Grusha sits bent at the weaving loom in the scullery. She and the child, who squats on the floor, are wrapped in blankets.

GRUSHA *sings while weaving:*

Then the lover started to leave
 Then his girl ran pleading after him
 Pleading and crying, crying and pleading:
 Dearest mine, dearest mine
 As you now go into battle
 As you now have to fight the enemy
 Don't throw yourself into the front line
 And don't push with the rear line.
 In front is red fire
 In the rear is red smoke.
 Stay wisely in between
 Keep near the standard bearer.
 The first ones always die
 The last ones are also hit
 Those in the centre come home.

Michael, we must be clever. If we make ourselves really small, like cockroaches, our sister-in-law will forget we're in the house. Then we can stay here till the snow melts. And don't cry because of the cold. Being poor and cold as well puts people off.

Enter Lavrenti. He sits down beside Grusha.

LAVRENTI: Why are you two sitting there muffled up like coachmen? Perhaps it's too cold in the room?

GRUSHA *hastily removing her shawl*: It's not too cold, Lavrenti.

LAVRENTI: If it's too cold, you oughtn't to sit here with the child. Aniko would blame herself. *Pause.* I hope the priest didn't question you about the child.

GRUSHA: He did, but I didn't tell him anything.

LAVRENTI: That's good. I wanted to talk to you about Aniko. She has a good heart—but she's very, very sensitive. People only have to mention our farm and she's worried. She takes everything to heart, you know. Our milkmaid once went to church with a hole in her stocking. Ever since then my

dear Aniko has always worn two pairs of stockings to church. It's hard to believe, but it's the old family in her. *He listens.* Are you sure there are no rats here? If so, you couldn't stay here. *Sounds of drops from the roof.* What's that dripping?

GRUSHA: Must be a barrel leaking.

LAVRENTI: Yes, it must be a barrel. Now you've already been here six months, haven't you? Was I talking about Aniko? Of course I didn't mention the Ironshirt. She has a weak heart. That's why she doesn't know you can't look for work. And that's why she made those remarks yesterday. *They listen again to the melting snow.* Can you believe it? She's worrying about your soldier. 'Suppose he comes back and doesn't find her!' she says, and lies awake. 'He can't come before the spring,' I tell her. The dear woman! *The drops begin to fall faster.* When d'you think he'll come? What's your idea? *Grusha is silent.* Not before the spring. That's what you think, too? *Grusha is silent.* I see you no longer believe he'll come back. *Grusha does not answer.* But when spring comes and the snow is melting on the passes you must leave here. Because then they can come and look for you. People are already talking about a child with an unmarried mother.

The beat of the falling drops has grown faster and steadier.

Grusha, the snow is melting on the roof and spring is here.

GRUSHA: Yes.

LAVRENTI *eagerly*: Let me tell you what we'll do. You need a place to go to. And because of the child—*he sighs*—you must have a husband, to stop people talking. I've made cautious inquiries about how we can get a husband for you, Grusha, and I've found one. I talked to a woman who has a son, just over the mountain, a little farm. She's willing.

GRUSHA: But I can't marry another man! I must wait for Simon Chachava.

LAVRENTI: Of course. That's all been considered. You don't need a man in bed, but a man on paper. And that's the very

man I've found. The son of the woman I spoke to is dying. Isn't that wonderful? He's just at his last gasp. And everything's as we have said: A man just over the mountain! And when you reached him he died, and so you're a widow. What do you say?

GRUSHA: I could do with a document with seals for Michael.

LAVRENTI: A seal makes all the difference. Without a seal even the Shah of Persia couldn't prove he is the Shah. And you'll have a roof over your head.

GRUSHA: How much does she want for it?

LAVRENTI: 400 piastres.

GRUSHA: Where will you find the money?

LAVRENTI *guiltily*: Aniko's milk money.

GRUSHA: No-one will know us over there. I'll do it.

LAVRENTI *gets up*: I'll tell the woman at once. *Exit quickly.*

GRUSHA: Michael, you cause a lot of trouble. I came by you as the pear tree comes by the sparrows. And because a Christian bends down and picks up a crust of bread so it won't go to waste. Michael, I ought to have walked away quickly on that Easter Sunday in Nukha. Now I'm the fool.

THE SINGER

The bridegroom was lying on his deathbed, when the bride arrived.

The bridegroom's mother was waiting at the door, bidding them hurry.

The bride brought along a child, the witness hid it during the wedding.

A space divided by a partition. On one side a bed. Under the mosquito net lies a very sick man. On the other side the mother-in-law rushes in pulling Grusha after her. They are followed by Lavrenti and the child.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Quick! Quick! Or he'll die on us before the wedding. *To Lavrenti*: But I was never told she already had a child.

LAVRENTI: What's it matter? *Pointing towards the dying man*: It's all the same to him in his condition.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Him? But I won't survive the shame. We're honest people. *She begins to weep.* My Yussup doesn't have to marry someone who already has a child.

LAVRENTI: All right, I'll add another 200 piastres. You have it in writing that the farm will go to you; but she has the right to live here for two years.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW *drying her tears*: It will hardly cover the funeral expenses. I hope she will really lend me a hand with the work. And now what's happened to the monk? He must have slipped out by the kitchen window. When they get wind in the village that Yussup's end is near, they'll all be round our necks. Oh dear! I'll go and get the monk. But he mustn't see the child.

LAVRENTI: I'll take care he doesn't see it. But why a monk? Why not a priest?

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Oh, he's just as good. I made one mistake: I paid him half his fee in advance. Now he'll have gone to the tavern. I hope . . . *She runs off.*

LAVRENTI: She saved on the priest, the wretch! She's hired a cheap monk.

GRUSHA: Send Simon Chachava to me if he turns up.

LAVRENTI: Yes. *Glancing at the sick man*: Won't you have a look at him?

Grusha, taking Michael to her, shakes her head.

He's not moving an eyelid. I hope we aren't too late.

They listen. On the opposite side enter neighbours, who look round and take up positions against the walls. They start muttering prayers. Enter the mother-in-law with the monk.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW *surprised and angry, to the monk*: Now we're for it! *She bows to the guests.* I must ask you to wait a few moments. My son's bride has just arrived from town and we've got to have an emergency wedding. *She goes with the monk into the bedchamber.* I knew you'd spread it about. *To Grusha*: The wedding can start at once. Here's the licence. I and the bride's brother—*Lavrenti tries to hide in the background, after having quickly taken Michael away from Grusha.*

The mother-in law beckons him away from the child—the bride's brother and I are the witnesses.

Grusha has bowed to the monk. They approach the bed: the mother-in-law lifts the mosquito-net: the monk begins babbling the marriage service in Latin. Meanwhile the mother-in-law beckons to Lavrenti to get rid of the child, but Lavrenti, fearing that the child will cry, draws its attention to the ceremony. Grusha glances once at the child, and Lavrenti makes the child wave to her.

THE MONK: Are you prepared to be a faithful, obedient and good wife to this man? And to cleave to him until death you do part?

GRUSHA *looking at the child*: Yes.

THE MONK *to the dying man*: And are you prepared to be a good and loving husband to your wife until death you do part? *As the dying man does not answer, the monk repeats the question, then looks round.*

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Of course he is! Didn't you hear him say yes?

THE MONK: All right. We declare this marriage contracted. Now what about Extreme Unction?

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Nothing doing! The wedding was quite expensive enough. I must now take care of the mourners. *To Lavrenti*: Did we say 700?

LAVRENTI: 600. *He pays*. Now I don't want to sit and get acquainted with the guests. So farewell, Grusha. And if my widowed sister comes to visit me one day, she'll get a 'welcome' from my wife. Or I'll get disagreeable.

He leaves. The mourners glance after him without interest.

THE MONK: And may one ask whose this child is?

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Is there a child? I don't see any child. And you don't see one either—understand? Or else I've seen all kinds of things happening behind the tavern! Come along now.

They move back to the room. After Grusha has put down the child and told it to be quiet, she is introduced to the neighbours.

This is my daughter-in-law. She arrived just in time to find dear Yussup still alive.

ONE OF THE WOMEN: He's been ill now a whole year, hasn't he? When my Vassili was called up he was there to say goodbye.

ANOTHER WOMAN: Such things are terrible for a farm. With the corn ripe on the stalk and the farmer in bed! It will be a blessing for him if he doesn't suffer much longer, I say.

FIRST WOMAN *confidentially*: At first we thought he took to his bed because of military service, you know. And now his end is coming.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Please sit down and have some cakes. *She beckons to Grusha and both women go into the bedroom, where they pick up trays of cakes from the floor. The guests, among them the monk, sit on the floor and begin conversing in subdued voices.*

A VERY OLD PEASANT *to whom the monk has slipped the bottle he has taken from his cassock*: There's a little one, you say! How can Yussup have managed that?

THIRD WOMAN: Anyway, she was lucky to have brought it off in time, with him so sick.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: They are gossiping already. And stuffing themselves with the funeral cakes at the same time. And if he doesn't die today, I'll have to bake fresh ones tomorrow.

GRUSHA: I'll bake them.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: When some riders passed by last night, and I went out to see who they were, he was lying there like a corpse! That's why I sent for you. It can't take much longer. *She listens.*

THE MONK: Dear wedding guests and mourners! We stand deeply moved in front of a bed of death and marriage, because the bride gets into bed and the groom into the grave. The groom is already washed, and the bride is already hot. For in the marriage-bed lies the last Will, and that makes people randy. Oh, my children, how varied is the fate of man! The one dies to get a roof over his head, and the other marries so that flesh may be turned to dust, from which it was made. Amen.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW *who had listened*: He's got his own

back. I shouldn't have hired such a cheap one. That's what you'd expect. An expensive one knows how to behave. In Sura there's one who is even in the odour of sanctity; but of course he charges a fortune. A fifty-piastre priest like this one here has no dignity. And as for piety, he has precisely fifty piastres' worth, and no more. And when I fetched him from the tavern he was just finishing a speech and shouting: 'The war is over, beware of the peace!' We must go in.

GRUSHA *giving Michael a cake*: Eat this cake and be a good boy, Michael. We are respectable now.

The two women carry the trays of cakes to the guests. The dying man is sitting up in bed; he puts his head out from under the mosquito-net and watches the two women. Then he sinks back again. The monk takes two bottles from his cassock and offers them to the peasant beside him. Enter three musicians, to whom the monk waves with a grin.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW *to the musicians*: What have you got your instruments for?

A MUSICIAN: Brother Anastasius here—*pointing at the monk*—told us there was a wedding going on.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: What! You brought them? Three more on my neck! Don't you know there's a dying man next door?

THE MONK: That's a tempting task for an artist. They could play a hushed Wedding March or a gay Funeral Dance.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: Well, you might as well play. I can't stop you eating, in any case.

The musicians play a musical medley. The women offer cakes.

THE MONK: The trumpet sounds like a whining baby. And you, little drum, what gossip are you spreading abroad?

A PEASANT *beside the monk*: What about the bride shaking a leg?

THE MONK: Shake the legs or rattle the bones?

THE PEASANT *beside the monk, singing*:

When pretty Miss Plushbottom wed
A rich man with no teeth in his head

They enquired, 'Is it fun?'

She replied, 'No, it's none.

Still, there're candles and soon he'll be dead.'

The mother-in-law throws the drunken man out. The music stops.

The guests are embarrassed. Pause.

THE GUESTS *loudly*: Have you heard the latest? The Grand Duke's back!—But the Princes are against him.—Oh, the Shah of Persia, they say, has lent him a great army, to restore order in Grusinia.—How is this possible? After all, the Shah of Persia is against the Grand Duke!—But against disorder, too.—In any case, the war's over. Our soldiers are already coming back.

Grusha drops the tray of cakes.

AN OLD WOMAN *to Grusha*: Are you feeling ill? That's just excitement about dear Yussup. Sit down and rest awhile, my dear.

Grusha stands, swaying.

THE GUESTS: Now everything will be as it was. Only the taxes will go up because we'll have to pay for the war.

GRUSHA *weakly*: Did someone say the soldiers are back?

A MAN: I did.

GRUSHA: That can't be true.

THE MAN *to a woman*: Show her the shawl. We bought it from a soldier. It's from Persia.

GRUSHA *looking at the shawl*: They are here.

A long pause. Grusha kneels as if to pick up the cakes. As she does so she takes the silver cross and chain out of her blouse, kisses it, and starts praying.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW *while the guests silently watch Grusha*: What's the matter with you? Won't you look after our guests? What's all this nonsense from the city got to do with us?

THE GUESTS *resuming their conversation while Grusha remains with her forehead bent to the ground*: Persian saddles can be bought from soldiers, but some exchange them for crutches.—Wars are won on one side only by the bigwigs, the soldiers on both sides are the losers.—At least the war's over now.

It's something that they can't call you up any more.—*The dying man sits bolt upright in bed. He listens.*—What we need most are two weeks of good weather.—There's hardly a pear on our trees this year.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW *offering the cakes*: Have some more cake. And enjoy it. There's more to come.

The mother-in-law goes to the bedroom with empty trays. Unaware of the dying man, she bends down to pick up some more cakes, when he begins to talk in a hoarse voice.

YUSSUP: How many more cakes are you going to stuff down their throats? D'you think I can shit money? *The mother-in-law starts, and stares at him aghast, while he puts his head out from behind the mosquito-net.* Did they say the war was over?

FIRST WOMAN *talking kindly to Grusha in the next room*: Has the young woman someone in the war?

THE MAN: That's good news that they're on their way home, eh?

YUSSUP: Don't stare so! Where's the wife you've foisted on me?

Receiving no answer, he climbs out of bed and in his nightshirt staggers past his mother into the other room. Trembling, she follows him with the cake tray.

THE GUESTS *seeing him and shrieking*: Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Yussup!

Everyone leaps up in alarm. The women rush to the door. Grusha, still on her knees, turns round and stares at the man.

YUSSUP: The funeral supper! That's what you'd like! Get out before I kick you out!

The guests stampede from the house.

YUSSUP *grumpily to Grusha*: That puts a spoke in your wheel, eh?

Receiving no answer, he turns round and takes a cake from the tray which his mother holds.

THE SINGER

Oh, confusion! The wife discovers that she has a husband!

By day there's the child, by night there's the man.

The lover is on his way day and night.

The married couple are looking at each other. The chamber is narrow.

Yussup sits naked in a high wooden bathtub. His mother pours water from a jug. Next door in the bedroom Grusha squats with Michael, who is playing at mending a straw mat.

YUSSUP: That's her business, not yours. Where's she hiding now?

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW *calling*: Grusha! The peasant wants you!

GRUSHA *to Michael*: There are still two holes to mend.

YUSSUP *as Grusha enters*: Scrub my back!

GRUSHA: Can't the peasant do that himself?

YUSSUP: 'Can't the peasant do that himself?' Get the brush! To hell with you! Are you the wife or are you a stranger? *To the mother-in-law*: Too cold!

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: I'll run and get some more hot water.

GRUSHA: Let me do it.

YUSSUP: You stay here. *The mother-in-law goes out.* Rub harder. And don't make such a fuss. You've seen a naked man before. That child of yours can't have come out of thin air.

GRUSHA: The child was not conceived in joy, if that's what the peasant means.

YUSSUP *turning and grinning*: You don't look like that. *Grusha stops scrubbing him and starts back. Enter the mother-in-law.* This is a nice thing you've saddled me with here! A mule for a wife!

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW: She isn't willing.

YUSSUP: Pour—but go easy! Ow! Go easy, I said. *To Grusha.* I'd be surprised if you hadn't been up to something in the city. What else would you be here for? But I won't say anything about that. I also haven't said anything about the bastard you brought into my house. But my patience with you is coming to an end. That's against nature. *To the mother-in-law*: More! *To Grusha*: And even if your soldier does return, you're married.

GRUSHA: Yes.

YUSSUP: But your soldier won't return now. Don't you believe it.

GRUSHA: No.

YUSSUP: You're cheating me. You're my wife and you're not my wife. Where you lie, nothing lies. And yet no other woman can lie there. When I go to work in the mornings I'm dead-tired. When I lie down at night I'm awake as the devil. God has made you a woman, and what d'you do about it? My fields don't bring me in enough to buy myself a woman in town. Besides, it's a long way. Woman hoes the fields and parts her legs. That's what our calendar says. D'you hear?

GRUSHA: Yes. *Quietly.* I don't like cheating you out of it.

YUSSUP: She doesn't like! Pour some more water. *The mother-in-law pours.* Ow!

THE SINGER

As she sat by the stream to wash the linen
She saw his image in the water, and his face grew dimmer
As the months passed by.
As she raised herself to wring the linen
She heard his voice from the murmuring maple, and his
voice grew fainter
As the months passed by.
Prayers and sighs grew more numerous, tears and sweat
flowed faster

As the months passed by, as the child grew up.
Grusha sits by a stream dipping linen into the water. Some distance away a few children are standing. Grusha is talking to Michael.

GRUSHA: You can play with them, Michael. But don't let them order you about because you're the smallest.

Michael nods and joins the children. They start playing.

THE TALLEST BOY: Today we're going to play Heads-off. To a fat boy: You're the Prince and you must laugh. To Michael: You're the Governor. To a girl: You're the Governor's wife and you cry when his head's chopped off. And I do the

chopping. *He shows his wooden sword.* With this. First, the Governor's led into the courtyard. The Prince walks ahead. The Governor's wife comes last.

They form a procession. The fat boy goes ahead, and laughs. Then comes Michael, and the tallest boy, and then the girl, who weeps.

MICHAEL *standing still*: Me too chop head off!

THE TALLEST BOY: That's my job. You're the smallest. The Governor's part is easiest. All you do is kneel down and have your head chopped off. That's simple.

MICHAEL: Me too have sword.

THE TALLEST BOY: That's mine. *He gives him a kick.*

THE GIRL *shouting to Grusha*: He doesn't want to do what he's told.

GRUSHA *laughing*: Even ducklings take to water, they say.

THE TALLEST BOY: You can play the Prince if you know how to laugh.

Michael shakes his head.

THE FAT BOY: I'm the best laughier. Let him chop off the head just once. Then you do it, then me.

Reluctantly the tallest boy hands Michael the wooden sword and kneels. The fat boy sits down, smacks his thigh and laughs with all his might. The girl weeps loudly. Michael swings the big sword and chops off the head. In doing so, he topples over.

THE TALLEST BOY: Hi, I'll show you how to do it properly.

Michael runs away, and the children run after him. Grusha laughs, following them with her eyes. On turning round, she sees Simon Chachava standing on the opposite bank. He wears a shabby uniform.

GRUSHA: Simon!

SIMON: Is that Grusha Vachnadze?

GRUSHA: Simon!

SIMON *politely*: A good morning, and good health to the young lady.

GRUSHA *gets up gaily and bows deeply*: A good morning to the soldier. And thank God he has returned in good health.

SIMON: They found better fish than me, so they didn't eat me, said the haddock.

GRUSHA: Courage, said the kitchen boy. Luck, said the hero.

SIMON: And how are things here? Was the winter bearable?

Did the neighbour behave?

GRUSHA: The winter was a little rough, the neighbour as usual, Simon.

SIMON: May one ask if a certain person is still in the habit of putting her leg in the water when washing her linen?

GRUSHA: The answer is no. Because of the eyes in the bushes.

SIMON: The young lady is talking about soldiers. Here stands a paymaster.

GRUSHA: Is that worth twenty piastres?

SIMON: And board.

GRUSHA *with tears in her eyes*: Behind the barracks under the date trees.

SIMON: Just there. I see someone has kept her eyes open.

GRUSHA: Someone has.

SIMON: And has not forgotten. *Grusha shakes her head*. And so the door is still on its hinges, as they say. *Grusha looks at him in silence and shakes her head again*. What's that mean? Is something wrong?

GRUSHA: Simon Chachava, I can never go back to Nukha. Something has happened.

SIMON: What has happened?

GRUSHA: It so happened that I knocked down an Ironshirt.

SIMON: Grusha Vachnadze will have had her reasons for that.

GRUSHA: Simon Chachava, my name is also no longer what it was.

SIMON *after a pause*: I don't understand that.

GRUSHA: When do women change their names, Simon? Let me explain it to you: Nothing stands between us. Everything between us has remained as it was. You've got to believe that.

SIMON: How can nothing stand between us and things be changed?

GRUSHA: How can I explain it to you? So fast and with the stream between us? Couldn't you cross that bridge?

SIMON: Perhaps it's no longer necessary.

GRUSHA: It's most necessary. Come over, Simon. Quick!

SIMON: Is the young lady saying that someone has come too late?

Grusha looks up at him in despair, her face streaming with tears. Simon stares before him. He picks up a piece of wood and starts cutting it.

THE SINGER

So many words are said, so many words are left unsaid.
The soldier has come. Whence he comes he doesn't say.
Hear what he thought but didn't say:

The battle began at dawn, grew bloody at noon.
The first fell before me, the second behind me, the third
at my side.

I trod on the first, I abandoned the second, the captain
sabred the third.

My one brother died by steel, my other brother died by
smoke.

My neck was burnt by fire, my hands froze in my gloves,
my toes in my socks.

For food I had aspen buds, for drink I had maple brew,
for bed I had stones in water.

SIMON: I see a cap in the grass. Is there a little one already?

GRUSHA: There is, Simon. How could I hide it? But please
don't let it worry you. It's not mine.

SIMON: They say: Once the wind begins to blow, it blows
through every crack. The woman need say no more.

Grusha lowers her head and says no more.

THE SINGER

There was great yearning but there was no waiting.

The oath is broken. Why was not disclosed.

Hear what she thought, but didn't say:

While you fought in the battle, soldier

The bloody battle, the bitter battle

I found a child who was helpless

And hadn't the heart to do away with it.

I had to care for what otherwise would have come to
harm

I had to bend down on the floor for breadcrumbs
 I had to tear myself to pieces for what was not mine
 But alien.
 Someone must be the helper.
 Because the little tree needs its water
 The little lamb loses its way when the herdsman is asleep
 And the bleating remains unheard.

SIMON: Give me back the cross I gave you. Or better, throw it in the stream.

He turns to go.

GRUSHA: Simon Chachava, don't go away. It isn't mine, it isn't mine! *She hears the children calling.* What is it, children?

VOICES: Soldiers have come!—They are taking Michael away!

Grusha stands aghast as two Ironshirts, with Michael between them, come towards her.

IRONSHIRT: Are you Grusha? *She nods.* Is that your child?

GRUSHA: Yes. *Simon goes off.* Simon!

IRONSHIRT: We have official orders to take this child, found in your charge, back to the city. There is suspicion that it is Michael Abashvili, son and heir of the late Governor Georgi Abashvili, and his wife, Natella Abashvili. Here is the document and the seal.

They lead the child away.

GRUSHA *running after them and shouting*: Leave it here, please! It's mine!

THE SINGER

The Ironshirts took the child away, the precious child.
 The unhappy girl followed them to the city, the dangerous place.
 The real mother demanded the child back. The foster mother faced her trial.
 Who will try the case, on whom will the child be bestowed?
 Who will be the Judge? A good one, a bad one?
 The city was in flames. On the Judgment Seat sat Azdak.

5

THE STORY OF THE JUDGE

THE SINGER

Listen now to the story of the Judge:

How he turned Judge, how he passed judgment, what
kind of Judge he is.

On the Easter Sunday of the great revolt, when the
Grand Duke was overthrown

And his Governor Abashvili, father of our child, lost his
head

The village clerk Azdak found a fugitive in the woods and
hid him in his hut.

*Azdak, in rags and tipsy, helps a fugitive dressed as a beggar into
his hut.*

AZDAK: Don't snort. You're not a horse. And it won't do you
any good with the police if you run like a dirty nose in
April. Stop, I tell you. *He catches the fugitive, who has trotted
into the hut as though he would go through the walls.* Sit down and
feed: here's a piece of cheese. *From under some rags in a chest
he fishes out some cheese, and the fugitive greedily begins to eat.*
Haven't had anything for some time, eh? *The fugitive groans.*
Why did you run so fast, you arse-hole? The police
wouldn't even have seen you!

THE FUGITIVE: Had to.

AZDAK: Blue funk? *The fugitive stares, uncomprehending.* Got the
squitters? Afraid? Don't slobber like a Grand Duke or a
sow. I can't stand it. It's well-born stinkers we've got to put
up with as God made them. Not the likes of you. I once
heard of a Senior Judge who farted at a public dinner. Just
to show his independence. Watching you eat like that really
gives me the most awful ideas! Why don't you say some-
thing? *Sharply.* Let's have a look at your hand. Can't you
hear? Show me your hand. *The fugitive slowly puts out his
hand.* White! So you're no beggar at all! A fraud! A swindle

on legs! And here am I hiding you from the police as though you were a decent human being! Why run like that if you're a landowner? Because that's what you are. Don't try to deny it. I see it in your guilty face. *He gets up.* Get out of here! *The fugitive looks uncertainly at him.* What are you waiting for, you peasant-flogger?

THE FUGITIVE: Am hunted. Ask for undivided attention. Make proposition.

AZDAK: What do you want to make? A proposition? Well, if that isn't the height of insolence! He making a proposition! The bitten man scratches his fingers bloody, and the leech makes a proposition. Get out, I tell you!

THE FUGITIVE: Understand point of view. Persuasion. Will pay 100,000 piastres for one night. How's that?

AZDAK: What? Do you think you can buy me? And for 100,000 piastres? A third-rate farm. Let's say 150,000. Got it?

THE FUGITIVE: Not on me, of course. Will be sent. Hope, don't doubt.

AZDAK: Doubt profoundly! Get out!

The fugitive gets up and trots to the door. A voice from off-stage.

VOICE: Azdak!

The fugitive turns, trots to the opposite corner and stands still.

AZDAK *shouting*: I'm not in. *He walks to the door.* Is that you spying around here again, Shauva?

POLICEMAN SHAUVA *outside, reproachfully*: You've snared another rabbit, Azdak. You promised me it wouldn't happen again.

AZDAK *severely*: Shauva, don't talk about things you don't understand. The rabbit is a dangerous and destructive animal. It devours plants, especially what they call weeds. So it must be exterminated.

SHAUVA: Azdak, don't be so hard on me. I'll lose my job if I don't arrest you. I know you have a good heart.

AZDAK: I *don't* have a good heart! How often am I to tell you I'm a man of intellect?

SHAUVA *slyly*: I know, Azdak. You're a superior person. You

say so yourself. I'm a Christian and an ignoramus. So I ask you: if one of the Prince's rabbits is stolen, and I'm a policeman, what am I to do with the offender?

AZDAK: Shauva, Shauva, shame on you! There you stand asking me a question. Nothing is more tempting than a question. Suppose you were a woman—let's say Nunovna, that bad girl—and you showed me your thigh—Nunovna's thigh, that is—and you asked me: what shall I do with my thigh? It itches. Is she as innocent as she pretends? No. I catch a rabbit, you catch a man. Man is made in God's image. Not so a rabbit, you know that. I'm a rabbit-eater; but you're a man-eater, Shauva. And God will pass judgment on you. Shauva, go home and repent. No, stop! There's something . . . *He looks at the fugitive, who stands trembling in the corner:* No, it's nothing after all. Go home and repent. *He slams the door behind Shauva. To the fugitive:* Now you're surprised, eh? Surprised I didn't hand you over? But I couldn't hand over even a bedbug to that beast of a policeman! It goes against my grain. Don't tremble at the sight of a policeman. So old and yet so cowardly! Finish your cheese, but eat it like a poor man, or else they'll still catch you. Do I even have to tell you how a poor man behaves? *He makes him sit down, and then gives him back the cheese.* The box is the table. Put your elbows on the table, and now surround the plate with your arms as though you expected the cheese to be snatched from you at any moment. What right have you to be safe? Now hold the knife as if it were a small sickle; and don't look so greedily at your cheese, look at it mournfully—because it's already disappearing—like all good things. *Azdak watches him.* They're after you. That speaks in your favour. But how can I be sure they're not mistaken about you? In Tiflis they once hanged a landowner, a Turk. He could prove he quartered his peasants instead of merely cutting them in half, as is the custom. And he squeezed twice the usual amount of taxes out of them. His zeal was above all suspicion, and yet they hanged him like a common criminal. Why? Because he was

a Turk—something he couldn't do much about. An injustice! He got on to the gallows like Pontius Pilate into the Creed. In a word, I don't trust you.

THE SINGER

Thus Azdak gave shelter to the old beggar
Only to find out that he was that murderer, the Grand Duke.

And he was ashamed of himself, he accused himself and ordered the policeman

To take him to Nukha, to Court, to be judged.

In the Court of Justice three Ironshirts sit drinking. From a pillar hangs a man in judge's robes. Enger Azdak, in chains, dragging Shauva behind him.

AZDAK *shouting*: I have helped the Grand Duke, the Grand Thief, the Grand Murderer, to escape! In the name of Justice, I demand to be judged severely in a public trial!

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: Who is this queer bird?

SHAUVA: That's our clerk, Azdak.

AZDAK: I am despicable, treacherous, branded! Tell them, flatfoot, how I insisted on being put in chains and brought to the capital. Because I sheltered the Grand Duke, the Grand Swindler, by mistake. As I realized only afterwards when I found this document in my hut. *The Ironshirts study the document. To Shauva*: They can't read. Point out that the branded man is accusing himself. Tell them how I forced you to walk with me through half the night, to get everything cleared up.

SHAUVA: And all by threats. That wasn't nice of you, Azdak.

AZDAK: Shauva, shut your trap. You don't understand. A new age has come, which will thunder over you. You're finished. The police will be wiped out, pfft! Everything is being investigated, brought into the open. In these circumstances a man prefers to give himself up. Why? Because he won't escape the mob. Tell them how I've been shouting all along Shoemaker Street! *He acts with expansive gestures, looking sideways at the Ironshirts.* 'Out of ignorance I let the

Grand Swindler escape. Tear me to pieces, brothers!' So as to get in first.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: And what was their answer?

SHAUVA: They comforted him in Butcher Street, and laughed themselves sick in Shoemaker Street. That's all.

AZDAK: But here with you it's different, I know you're men of iron. Brothers, where is the Judge? I must be tried.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT *pointing at the hanged man*: Here's the Judge. And stop 'brothering' us. That's rather a sore spot this evening.

AZDAK: 'Here's the Judge.' That's an answer never heard in Grusinia before. Citizens, where's His Excellency the Governor? *Pointing at the gallows*: Here's His Excellency, stranger. Where's the Chief Tax Collector? Where's the official Recruiting Officer? The Patriarch? The Chief of Police? Here, here, here—all here. Brothers, that's what I expected from you.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: Stop! What did you expect, you bird?

AZDAK: What happened in Persia, brothers. What happened there.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: And what did happen in Persia?

AZDAK: Forty years ago. Everyone hanged. Viziers, tax-collectors. My grandfather, a remarkable man, saw it all. For three whole days. Everywhere.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: And who reigned after the Vizier was hanged?

AZDAK: A peasant.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: And who commanded the army?

AZDAK: A soldier, soldier.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: And who paid the wages?

AZDAK: A dyer. A dyer paid the wages.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: Wasn't it a carpet weaver perhaps?

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: And why did all this happen, you Persian?

AZDAK: 'Why did all this happen?' Must there be a special

reason? Why do you scratch yourself, brother? War! Too long a war! And no justice! My grandfather brought back a song that tells what it was all about. I and my friend the policeman will sing it for you. *To Shawva:* And hold on to the rope, that's part of it. *He sings, with Shawva holding the rope.*

Why don't our sons bleed any longer, why don't our daughters weep any more?

Why do only the calves in the slaughterhouse have any blood, why only willows on Lake Urmi tears?

The Grand King must have a new province, the peasant must relinquish his savings.

In order to capture the roof of the world, the cottage roofs have to be torn down.

Our men are scattered in all directions, so that the great ones can eat at home.

The soldiers kill each other, the marshals salute each other.

The widow's tax money has to be fingered to see if it's good, the swords break.

The battle has been lost, but the helmets have been paid for.

Is that right? Is that right?

SHAUVA: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, that's right.

AZDAK: Do you want to hear the whole thing?

The first Ironshirt nods.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT *to Shawva:* Did he teach you that song?

SHAUVA: Yes. Only my voice isn't good.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: No. *To Azdak:* Go on singing.

AZDAK: The second verse is about the peace. *He sings:*

The offices are jammed, the officials are working in the streets.

The rivers overflow their banks and lay waste the fields.
Those incapable of letting down their own trousers rule countries.

Those who can't count up to four devour eight courses.

The corn farmers look round for buyers, but see only the starving.

The weavers go home from their looms in rags.

Is that right? Is that right?

SHAUVA: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, that's right.

AZDAK:

That's why our sons bleed no longer, our daughters weep no more.

That's why only the calves in the slaughterhouse have any blood.

And the willows in the morning on Lake Urmi have any tears.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT *after a pause*: Are you going to sing that song here in town?

AZDAK: Of course. What's wrong with it?

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: Do you see the sky getting red? *Turning round, Azdak sees the sky reddened by fire.* That's in the outer town. This morning when Prince Kazbeki had Governor Abashvili beheaded our carpet weavers also caught the 'Persian disease'. They asked if Prince Kazbeki isn't eating too many courses. And this afternoon they strung up the town judge. But we beat them to pulp for two piastres per weaver, you understand?

AZDAK *after a pause*: I understand.

He glances shyly round and, creeping away, sits down in a corner, his head in his hands.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT *to the third, after they have all had a drink*: Just wait and see what'll happen next.

The first and second Ironshirts walk towards Azdak and block his exit.

SHAUVA: I don't think he's a really bad character, gentlemen. He poaches a few chickens here and there, and perhaps an odd rabbit.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT *approaching Azdak*: You've come here to fish in troubled waters, eh?

AZDAK *looking up*: I don't know why I've come here.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: Do you happen to be in with the

carpet weavers? *Azduk shakes his head.* And what about this song?

AZDAK: From my grandfather. A stupid, ignorant man.

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: Right. And what about the dyer who paid the wages?

AZDAK: That was in Persia.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: And what about denouncing yourself for not having hanged the Grand Duke with your own hands?

AZDAK: Didn't I tell you that I let him escape?

SHAUVA: I swear to it. He let him escape.

The Ironshirts drag Azduk screaming to the gallows. Then they let him loose and burst out laughing. Azduk joins in the laughter, laughing loudest. They then unchain him. They all start drinking. Enter the fat prince with a young man.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT to *Azduk*: There you have your new age.

More laughter.

THE FAT PRINCE: And what is there to laugh about here, my friends? Permit me a serious word. Yesterday morning the Princes of Grusinia overthrew the Grand Duke's war-thirsty government and did away with his governors. Unfortunately the Grand Duke himself escaped. In this fateful hour our carpet weavers, these eternal trouble-makers, had the audacity to incite a rebellion and hang our universally beloved city Judge, our dear Illa Orbeliani. Tut-tut. My friends, we need peace, peace, peace in Grusinia. And justice. Here I bring you my dear nephew, Bizergan Kazbeki. He's to be the new Judge, a talented fellow. I say: the people must decide.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: Does this mean we elect the Judge?

THE FAT PRINCE: Precisely. The people propose a talented fellow. Confer, my friends. *The Ironshirts confer.* Don't worry, little fox. The job's yours. And once we've run the Grand Duke to earth we won't have to kiss the rabble's arse any more.

THE IRONSHIRTS *to each other*: They've got the jitters because they still haven't caught the Grand Duke.—We've this clerk to thank for that. He let him get away.—They're not sure of things yet. So they say: 'My friends!' And: 'The people must decide!'—Now he even wants justice for Grusinia!—But fun's fun as long as it lasts.—We'll ask the clerk; he knows all about justice. Hey, scoundrel . . .

AZDAK: You mean me?

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT *continues*: Would you like to have the nephew as Judge?

AZDAK: You asking me? You're not really asking me that, are you?

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: Why not? Anything for a laugh!

AZDAK: I take it you want him put to the test? Am I right? Have you a crook on hand? An experienced one? So the candidate can show how good he is?

THE THIRD IRONSHIRT: Let me see. We have the Governor's tart's two doctors down there. Let's use them.

AZDAK: Stop! That's no good! You can't take real crooks till we're sure of the Judge being appointed. He may be an ass, but he must be appointed or else the law is violated. The law is a very sensitive organ. Like the spleen. Once attacked with fists, death occurs. You can hang those two. Why not? You won't have violated the law, because no Judge was present. Judgment must always be passed with complete solemnity—because it's such rot. Suppose a Judge throws a woman into clink for having stolen a corncake for her child. And he isn't wearing his robes. Or he's scratching himself while passing sentence so that more than a third of his body is exposed—in which case he'd have to scratch his thigh—then the sentence he passes is a disgrace and the law is violated. It would be easier for a Judge's robe and a Judge's hat to pass sentence than for a man without all that paraphernalia. If you don't look out, the law goes up in smoke. You don't taste wine by offering it to a dog. Why not? Because the wine would be gone.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: So what do you suggest, you hair-splitter?

AZDAK: I'll be the defendant. I even know what sort. *Azduk whispers to them.*

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: You? *All burst out laughing.*

THE FAT PRINCE: What have you decided?

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: We've decided to have a rehearsal. Our good friend will act as defendant, and here's the Judge's seat for the candidate.

THE FAT PRINCE: That's unusual. But why not? *To the nephew:* A mere formality, little fox. What did they teach you? Who gets there first? The slow runner or the fast one?

THE NEPHEW: The silent one, Uncle Arsen.

The nephew sits in the Judge's seat, the fat prince standing behind him. The Ironshirts sit on the steps. Enter Azduk, imitating the unmistakable gait of the Grand Duke.

AZDAK: Is there anyone here who knows me? I am the Grand Duke.

THE FAT PRINCE: What is he?

THE SECOND IRONSHIRT: The Grand Duke. He really does know him.

THE FAT PRINCE: Good.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: Get on with the proceedings.

AZDAK: Listen! I'm accused of war-mongering. Ridiculous! Am saying: ridiculous! Is that enough? If not, have brought lawyers along. About 500. *He points behind him, pretending to be surrounded by lawyers.* Requisition all available seats for lawyers. *The Ironshirts laugh; the fat prince joins in.*

THE NEPHEW *to the Ironshirts*: Do you want me to try this case? I must admit I find it rather unusual. From the point of view of taste, I mean.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: Go on.

THE FAT PRINCE *smiling*: Let him have it, little fox!

THE NEPHEW: All right. People of Grusinia versus Grand Duke. What have you to say, defendant?

AZDAK: Any amount. Of course, have myself read war lost. Started war at the time on advice of patriots like Uncle

Kazbeki. Demand Uncle Kazbeki as witness. *The Ironshirts laugh.*

THE FAT PRINCE *to the Ironshirts, affably*: Queer fish, eh?

THE NEPHEW: Motion overruled. You're being accused not of declaring war, which every ruler has to do once in a while, but of conducting it badly.

AZDAK: Rot! Didn't conduct it at all! Had it conducted. Had it conducted by Princes. Made a mess of it, of course.

THE NEPHEW: Do you deny having been Commander in Chief?

AZDAK: Not at all. Always was Commander in Chief. Even at birth howled at wet-nurse; trained to drop turds in latrine. Got used to command. Always commanded officials to rob my cash-box. Officers flog soldiers only on my command. Landlords sleep with peasants' wives only when strictly commanded by me. Uncle Kazbeki here grew stomach only on my command.

THE IRONSHIRTS *clapping*: He's good! Up the Grand Duke!

THE FAT PRINCE: Answer him, little fox! I'm with you!

THE NEPHEW: I shall answer him according to the dignity of the law. Defendant, preserve the dignity of the law.

AZDAK: Agreed. Command you proceed with the trial.

THE NEPHEW: It's not your business to command me. So you claim the Princes forced you to declare war. Then how can you claim they made a mess of it?

AZDAK: Didn't send enough troops. Embezzled funds. Brought sick horses. During attack found drunk in whorehouse. Propose Uncle Kaz as witness. *The Ironshirts laugh.*

THE NEPHEW: Are you making the outrageous claim that the Princes of this country did not fight?

AZDAK: No. Princes fought. Fought for war contracts.

THE FAT PRINCE *jumping up*: That's too much! This man talks like a carpet weaver!

AZDAK: Really? Only telling the truth!

THE FAT PRINCE: Hang him! Hang him!

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: Keep quiet. Get on, Excellency.

THE NEPHEW: Quiet! Now pass sentence. Must be hanged.

Hanged by the neck. Having lost war. Sentence passed. No appeal.

THE FAT PRINCE *hysterically*: Away with him! Away with him! Away with him!

AZDAK Young man, seriously advise not to fall publicly into jerky, clipped manner of speech. Can't be employed as watchdog if howl like wolf. Got it?

THE FAT PRINCE: Hang him!

AZDAK: If people realize Princes talk same language as Grand Dukes, may even hang Grand Dukes and Princes. By the way, sentence quashed. Reason: war lost, but not for Princes. Princes have won *their* war. Got themselves paid 3,863,000 piastres for horses not delivered.

THE FAT PRINCE: Hang him!

AZDAK: 8,240,000 piastres for food supplies not produced.

THE FAT PRINCE: Hang him!

AZDAK: Are therefore victors. War lost only for Grusinia, which is not present in this Court.

THE FAT PRINCE: I think that's enough, my friends. *To Azdak*: You can withdraw, gaol-bird. *To the Ironshirts*: I think you can now ratify the new Judge's appointment, my friends.

THE FIRST IRONSHIRT: Yes, we can do that. Take down the Judge's robe. *One of the Ironshirts climbs on the back of another and pulls the robe off the hanged man.* And now—to the nephew—you be off so that we can put the right arse on the right seat. *To Azdak*: Step forward, you, and sit on the Judge's seat. *Azdak hesitates.* Sit down up there, man. *Azdak is thrust on to the seat by the Ironshirts.* The Judge was always a rascal. Now the rascal shall be the Judge. *The Judge's robe is placed round his shoulders, the wicker from a bottle on his head.* Look! There's a Judge for you!

THE SINGER

Now there was civil war in the land. The rulers were unsafe.

Now Azdak was made a Judge by the Ironshirts.

Now Azdak remained a Judge for two years.

THE SINGER WITH HIS MUSICIANS

Great houses turn to ashes
 And blood runs down the street.
 Rats come out of the sewers
 And maggots out of the meat.
 The thug and the blasphemer
 Lounge by the altar-stone:
 Now, now, now Azdak
 Sits on the Judgment throne.

Azdak sits on the Judge's seat peeling an apple. Shawwa sweeps out the hall. On one side an invalid in a wheelchair, the accused doctor and a man in rags with a limp; opposite, a young man accused of blackmail. An Ironshirt stands on guard holding the Ironshirts' banner.

AZDAK: In view of the large number of cases, the Court today will hear two cases simultaneously. Before I open the proceedings, a short announcement: I receive—*he stretches out his hand; only the blackmailer produces some money and hands it to him*—I reserve for myself the right to punish one of these parties here—*he glances at the invalid*—for contempt of court. You—to the doctor—are a doctor, and you—to the invalid—are bringing a complaint against him. Is the doctor responsible for your condition?

THE INVALID: Yes. I had a stroke because of him.

AZDAK: That sounds like professional negligence.

THE INVALID: More than negligence. I gave this man money to study. So far he hasn't paid me back one penny. And when I heard he was treating a patient free, I had a stroke.

AZDAK: Rightly. *To the limping man.* And you, what do you want here?

THE LIMPING MAN: I'm the patient, your Worship.

AZDAK: He treated your leg?

THE LIMPING MAN: Not the right one. My rheumatism was in the left leg, and he operated on my right. That's why I'm limping now.

AZDAK: And you got that free?

THE INVALID: A 500-piastre operation free! For nothing! For a God-Bless-You! And I paid this man's studies! *To the doctor*: Did you learn to operate for nothing at school?

THE DOCTOR *to Azdak*: Your Worship, it is actually the custom to demand the fee before the operation, as the patient is more willing to pay before an operation than after. Which is only human. In this case I was convinced, when I started the operation, that my servant had already received the fee. In this I was mistaken.

THE INVALID: He was mistaken! A good doctor doesn't make mistakes. He examines before he operates.

AZDAK: That's right. *To Shauva*: Public Prosecutor, what's the other case about?

SHAUVA *busily sweeping*: Blackmail.

THE BLACKMAILER: High Court of Justice, I'm innocent. I only wanted to find out from the landowner in question if he really had raped his niece. He kindly informed me that this was not the case, and gave me the money only so that I could let my uncle study music.

AZDAK: Ah ha! *To the doctor*: You on the other hand can't produce any extenuating circumstances in your defence?

THE DOCTOR: Except that to err is human.

AZDAK: And you know that in money matters a good doctor is conscious of his responsibility? I once heard of a doctor who made a thousand piastres out of one sprained finger: he discovered it had something to do with the circulation of the blood, which a less good doctor would have overlooked. On another occasion, by careful treatment, he turned a mediocre gall bladder into a gold mine. You have no excuse, Doctor. The corn merchant Uxu made his son study medicine to get some knowledge of trade—our medical schools are that good. *To the blackmailer*: What's the name of the landowner?

SHAUVA: He doesn't want it to be known.

AZDAK: In that case I will pass judgment. The Court considers the blackmail proved. And you—*to the invalid*—are sentenced to a fine of 1000 piastres. If you get a second

stroke the doctor will have to treat you free and if necessary amputate. *To the limping man*: As compensation, you will receive a bottle of embrocation. *To the blackmailer*: You are sentenced to hand over half the proceeds of your deal to the Public Prosecutor, to keep the landowner's name secret. You are advised, moreover, to study medicine. You seem well suited to that profession. And you, Doctor, are acquitted because of an inexcusable professional mistake. The next cases!

THE SINGER WITH HIS MUSICIANS

Beware of willing Judges
 For Truth is a black cat
 In a windowless room at midnight
 And Justice a blind bat.
 A third and shrugging party
 Alone can right our wrong.
 This, this, this, Azdak
 Does for a mere song.

Enter Azdak from the caravansary on the highway, followed by the old, bearded innkeeper. The Judge's seat is carried by a manservant and Shauva. An Ironshirt with a banner takes up position.

AZDAK: Put it here. Then at least we can get some air and a little breeze from the lemon grove over there. It's good for Justice to do it in the open. The wind blows her skirts up and you can see what's underneath. Shauva, we have eaten too much. These rounds of inspection are very exhausting. *To the innkeeper*: So it's about your daughter-in-law?

THE INNKEEPER: Your Worship, it's about the family honour. I wish to bring an action on behalf of my son, who's gone on business across the mountain. This is the offending stableman, and here's my unfortunate daughter-in-law.

Enter the daughter-in-law, a voluptuous wench. She is veiled.

AZDAK *sitting down*: I receive. *Sighing, the innkeeper hands him some money.* Good. Now the formalities are disposed of. This is a case of rape?

THE INNKEEPER: Your Worship, I surprised this rascal in the stable in the act of laying our Ludovica in the straw.

AZDAK: Quite right, the stable. Beautiful horses. I particularly like the little roan.

THE INNKEEPER: The first thing I did of course was to berate Ludovica on behalf of my son.

AZDAK *seriously*: I said I liked the little roan.

THE INNKEEPER *coldly*: Really?—Ludovica admitted that the stableman took her against her will.

AZDAK: Take off your veil, Ludovica. *She does so.* Ludovica, you please the Court. Tell us how it happened.

LUDOVICA *as though well rehearsed*: When I entered the stable to look at the new foal, the stableman said to me of his own accord: 'It's hot today' and laid his hand on my left breast. I said to him: 'Don't do that!' But he continued to handle me indecently, which provoked my anger. Before I realized his sinful intentions, he became intimate with me. It had already happened when my father-in-law entered and accidentally trod on me.

THE INNKEEPER *explaining*: On behalf of my son.

AZDAK *to the stableman*: Do you admit that you started it?

THE STABLEMAN: Yes.

AZDAK: Ludovica, do you like to eat sweet things?

LUDOVICA: Yes, sunflower seeds.

AZDAK: Do you like sitting a long time in the tub?

LUDOVICA: Half an hour or so.

AZDAK: Public Prosecutor, just drop your knife on the floor.

Shawa does so. Ludovica, go and pick up the Public Prosecutor's knife.

Ludovica, hips swaying, goes and picks up the knife.

Azdak points at her. Do you see that? The way it sways? The criminal element has been discovered. The rape has been proved. By eating too much, especially sweet things, by lying too long in warm water, by laziness and too soft a skin, you have raped the poor man. Do you imagine you can go around with a bottom like that and get away with it in Court? This is a case of deliberate assault with a dangerous weapon. You are sentenced to hand over to the Court the little roan which your father liked to ride on behalf of

his son. And now, Ludovica, come with me to the stable so that the Court may investigage the scene of the crime.

Azdak is carried on his Judge's seat by Ironshirts from place to place on the Grusinian highway. Behind him come Shawwa dragging the gallows and the stableman leading the little roan.

THE SINGER WITH HIS MUSICIANS

No more did the Lower Orders

Tremble in their shoes

At the bellows of their Betters

At Come-Here's and Listen-You's.

His balances were crooked

But they shouted in the streets:—

'Good, good, good is Azdak

And the measure that he metes!'

He took them from Wealthy Peter

To give to Penniless Paul

Sealed his illegal judgments

With a waxen tear, and all

The rag-tag-and-bobtail

Ran crying up and down:—

'Cheer, cheer, cheer for Azdak

The darling of the town!'

The little group slowly withdraws.

To love your next-door neighbour

Approach him with an axe

For prayers and saws and sermons

Are unconvincing facts.

What miracles of preaching

A good sharp blade can do:

So, so, so, so Azdak

Makes miracles come true.

Azdak's Judge's seat is in a tavern. Three farmers stand before Azdak. Shawwa brings him wine. In a corner stands an old peasant woman. In the open doorway, and outside, stand villagers and spectators. An Ironshirt stands guard with a banner.

AZDAK: The Public Prosecutor opens the proceedings.

SHAUVA: It's about a cow. For five weeks the defendant has had a cow in her stable, the property of farmer Suru. She was also found to be in the possession of a stolen ham. And cows belonging to farmer Shutoff were killed after he had asked the defendant to pay the rent for a field.

THE FARMERS: It's about my ham, Your Worship.—It's about my cow, Your Worship.—It's about my field, Your Worship.

AZDAK: Granny, what have you got to say to all this?

THE OLD WOMAN: Your Worship, one night towards morning, five weeks ago, there was a knock at my door, and outside stood a bearded man with a cow. He said, 'Dear woman, I am the miracle-working St Banditus. And because your son has been killed in the war, I bring you this cow as a keepsake. Take good care of it!'

THE FARMERS: The robber Irakli, Your Worship!—Her brother-in-law, Your Worship! The cattle thief, the incendiary!—He must be beheaded!

Outside a woman screams. The crowd grows restless and retreats. Enter the bandit Irakli, with a huge axe.

THE FARMERS: Irakli! *They cross themselves.*

THE BANDIT: A very good evening, dear friends! A glass of wine!

AZDAK: Public Prosecutor, a jug of wine for the guest. And who are you?

THE BANDIT: I'm a wandering hermit, Your Worship. And thank you for the kind gift. *He empties the glass which Shauva has brought. Same again!*

AZDAK: I'm Azdak. *He gets up and bows. The bandit also bows.* The Court welcomes the stranger hermit. Go on with your story, Granny.

THE OLD WOMAN: Your Worship, that first night I didn't know that St Banditus could work miracles, it was only the cow. But one night a few days later the farmer's servants came to take the cow away from me. Then they turned round in front of my door and went off without the cow.

And on their heads sprouted bumps big as a fist. Then I knew that St Banditus had changed their hearts and turned them into friendly people.

The bandit roars with laughter.

THE FIRST FARMER: I know what changed them.

AZDAK: That's good. You can tell us later. Continue.

THE OLD WOMAN: Your Worship, the next one to become a good man was farmer Shutoff—a devil, as everyone knows. But St Banditus brought it about that Shutoff let me off paying the rent for the field.

THE SECOND FARMER: Because my cows were killed in the field.

The bandit laughs.

THE OLD WOMAN *answering Azdak's sign to continue*: And then one morning the ham came flying in at my window. It hit me in the small of the back. I've been lame ever since. Look, Your Worship. *She limps a few steps. The bandit laughs.* I ask Your Worship: when was a poor old body ever given a ham except by a miracle?

The bandit starts sobbing.

AZDAK *rising from his seat*: Granny, that's a question that strikes straight at the Court's heart. Be so kind as to sit down here.

Hesitating, the old woman sits on the Judge's seat. Azdak sits on the floor, glass in hand.

Little mother, I almost called you Mother Grusinia, the woebegone

The bereaved one, whose sons are in the wai.

Who is beaten with fists, but full of hope.

Who weeps when she is given a cow

And is surprised when she is not beaten.

Little mother, pass merciful sentence on us, the damned!

He bellows to the farmers.

Admit that you don't believe in miracles, you atheists! Each of you is sentenced to pay 500 piastres! For your lack of faith. Get out!

The farmers creep out.

And you, little mother, and you—to *the bandit*—pious man,
drink a jug of wine with the Public Prosecutor and Azdak!

THE SINGER WITH HIS MUSICIANS

To feed the starving people
He broke the laws like bread
There on the seat of justice
With the gallows over his head
For more than seven hundred
Days he calmed their wails
Well, well, well, did Azdak
Measure with false scales.

Two summers and two winters
A poor man judged the poor
And on the wreck of justice
He brought them safe to shore
For he spoke in the mob language
That the mob understands.
I, I, I, cried Azdak
Take bribes from empty hands.

THE SINGER

Then the era of disorder was over, the Grand Duke
returned
The Governor's wife returned, a Judgment was held.
Many people died, the suburbs burned anew, and fear
seized Azdak.

*Azdak's Judge's seat stands again in the Court of Justice. Azdak
sits on the ground mending a shoe and talking to Shauva. Noises
outside. Above a wall the fat prince's head is carried by on a lance.*

AZDAK: Shauva, your days of slavery are numbered, perhaps
even the minutes. For a long time I have held you on the
iron curb of reason, and it has made your mouth bloody.
I have lashed you with arguments founded on reason, and
ill-treated you with logic. You are by nature a weak
creature, and if one slyly throws you an argument, you have
to devour it; you can't resist. By nature you are compelled
to lick the hand of a superior being, but superior beings

can be very different. And now comes your liberation, and you will soon be able to follow your inclinations, which are low. You will be able to follow your unerring instinct, which teaches you to plant your heavy boot on the faces of men. Gone is the era of confusion and disorder, and the great times which I found described in the Song of Chaos have not yet come. Let us now sing that song together in memory of those wonderful days. Sit down and don't violate the music. Don't be afraid. It sounds all right. It has a popular refrain.

He sings

Sister, hide your face; brother, take your knife, the times are out of joint.

The noblemen are full of complaints, the simple folk full of joy.

The city says: let us drive the strong ones out of our midst. Storm the government buildings, destroy the lists of the serfs.

Now the masters' noses are put to the grindstone. Those who never saw the day have emerged.

The poor-boxes of ebony are broken, the precious sesame wood is used for beds.

He who lacked bread now possesses barns; he who lived on the corn of charity, now measures it out himself.

SHAUVA: Oh, oh, oh, oh.

AZDAK:

Where are you, General? Please, please, please, restore order.

The son of the nobleman can no longer be recognized; the child of the mistress becomes the son of her slave.

The councillors are taking shelter in the barn; he who was barely allowed to sleep on the wall now lolls in bed.

He who once rowed a boat now owns ships; when their owner looks for them, they are no longer his.

Five men are sent out by their master. They say: go yourself, we have arrived.

SHAUVA: Oh, oh, oh, oh.

AZDAK:

Where are you, General? Please, please, please restore order!

Yes, so it might have been, if order had been much longer neglected. But now the Grand Duke, whose life I saved like a fool, has returned to the Capital. And the Persians have lent him an army to restore order. The outer town is already in flames. Go and get me the Big Book I like to sit on. *Shauva brings the book from the Judge's seat. Azdak opens it* This is the Statute Book and I've always used it, as you can confirm.

SHAUVA: Yes, to sit on.

AZDAK: Now I'd better look and see what they can do to me, because I've always allowed the have-nots to get away with everything. And I'll have to pay for it dearly. I helped to put Poverty on to its rickety legs, so they'll hang me for drunkenness. I peeped into the rich man's pocket, which is considered bad taste. And I can't hide anywhere, for all the world knows me, since I have helped the world.

SHAUVA: Someone's coming!

AZDAK *in a panic walks trembling to the seat*: The game is up! But I'll give no man the pleasure of seeing human greatness. I'll beg on my knees for mercy. Spittle will slobber down my chin. The fear of death is upon me.

Enter Natella Abashvili, the Governor's wife, followed by the Adjutant and an Ironshirt.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: What kind of man is that, Shalva?

AZDAK: A willing one, Your Excellency, a man ready to oblige.

THE ADJUTANT: Natella Abashvili, wife of the late Governor, has just returned and is looking for her three-year-old son, Michael. She has been informed that the child was abducted to the mountains by a former servant.

AZDAK: It will be brought back, Your Highness, at your service.

THE ADJUTANT: They say that the person in question is passing it off as her own child.

AZDAK: She will be beheaded, Your Highness, at your service.

THE ADJUTANT: That's all.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *leaving*: I don't like that man.

AZDAK *following her to the door, and bowing*: Everything will be arranged, Your Highness, at your service.

6

THE CHALK CIRCLE

THE SINGER

Now listen to the story of the trial concerning the child of
the Governor Abashvili

To establish the true mother

By the famous test of the Chalk Circle.

The courtyard of the lawcourts in Nukha. Ironshirts lead Michael in, then go across the stage and out at the back. One Ironshirt holds Grusha back under the doorway with his lance until the child has been taken away. Then she is admitted. She is accompanied by the former Governor's cook. Distant noises and a fire-red sky.

GRUSHA: He's so good, he can wash himself already.

THE COOK: You're lucky. This is not a real Judge; this is Azdak. He's a drunk and doesn't understand anything. And the biggest thieves have been acquitted by him, because he mixes everything up and because the rich never offer him big enough bribes. The likes of us get off lightly sometimes.

GRUSHA: I need some luck today.

THE COOK: Touch wood. *She crosses herself.* I think I'd better say a quick prayer that the Judge will be drunk.

Her lips move in prayer, while Grusha looks round in vain for the child.

THE COOK: What I can't understand is why you want to hold on to it at any price, if it's not yours. In these days.

GRUSHA: It's mine, I've brought it up.

THE COOK: But didn't you ever wonder what would happen when she returned?

GRUSHA: At first I thought I'd give it back to her. Then I thought she wouldn't return.

THE COOK: And a borrowed coat keeps one warm, too, eh?
Grusha nods. I'll swear anything you like, because you're a decent person. *Memorizes aloud:* I had him in my care for five piastres, and on Thursday evening, when the riots started, Grusha came to fetch him. *She sees the soldier Chachava, approaching.* But you have done Simon great wrong. I've talked to him. He can't understand it.

GRUSHA *unaware of Simon's presence*: I can't be bothered with that man just now, if he doesn't understand anything.

THE COOK: He has understood that the child is not yours; but that you're married and won't be free until death parts you—he can't understand that.

Grusha sees Simon and greets him.

SIMON *gloomily*: I wanted to tell the woman that I am ready to swear I am the father of the child.

GRUSHA *low*: That's right, Simon.

SIMON: At the same time, I would like to say that I am hereby not bound to anything; nor the woman, either.

THE COOK: That's unnecessary. She's married. You know that.

SIMON: That's her business and doesn't need rubbing in.

Enter two Ironshirts.

THE IRONSHIRTS: Where's the Judge?—Has anyone seen the Judge?

GRUSHA *who has turned away and covered her face*: Stand in front of me. I shouldn't have come to Nukha. If I run into the Ironshirt, the one I hit over the head . . .

The Ironshirt who has brought in the child steps forward.

THE IRONSHIRT: The Judge isn't here.

The two Ironshirts go on searching.

THE COOK: I hope something hasn't happened to him. With any other Judge you'd have less chance than a chicken has teeth.

Enter another Ironshirt.

THE IRONSHIRT *who had inquired for the Judge, to the other Iron-shirt*: There are only two old people and a child here. The Judge has bolted.

THE OTHER IRONSHIRT: Go on searching!

The first two Ironshirts go out quickly. The third remains behind. Grusha lets out a scream. The Ironshirt turns round. He is the Corporal, and has a large scar right across his face.

THE IRONSHIRT *in the gateway*: What's the matter, Shotta? Do you know her?

THE CORPORAL *after a long stare*: No.

THE IRONSHIRT: She's the one who's supposed to have stolen the Abashvili child. If you know anything about it, Shotta, you can make a packet of money.

Exit the Corporal, cursing.

THE COOK: Was it him? *Grusha nods*. I think he'll keep his mouth shut, otherwise he'll have to admit he was after the child.

GRUSHA *relieved*: I'd almost forgotten I'd saved the child from them . . .

Enter the Governor's wife, followed by the Adjutant and two lawyers.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Thank God! At least the common people aren't here. I can't stand their smell, it always gives me migraine

THE FIRST LAWYER: Madam, I must ask you to be as careful as possible in everything you say, until we have another Judge.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: But I didn't say anything, Illo Shuboladze. I love the people—with their simple, straightforward ways. It's just their smell that brings on my migraine.

THE SECOND LAWYER: There will hardly be any spectators. Most of the population is behind locked doors because of the riots in the outer town.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *looking at Grusha*: Is that the creature?

THE FIRST LAWYER: I beg you, most gracious Natella

Abashvili, to abstain from all invective until it is absolutely certain that the Grand Duke has appointed a new Judge and we have got rid of the present one, who is about the lowest ever seen in a Judge's robe. And things seem to be on the move, as you will see.

Ironshirts enter the courtyard.

THE COOK: Her Ladyship wouldn't hesitate to pull your hair out if she didn't know that Azdak is for the poor people. He goes by the face.

Two Ironshirts begin by fastening a rope to the pillar. Azdak, in chains, is led in, followed by Shauva, also in chains. The three farmers bring up the rear.

ONE IRONSHIRT: Trying to run away, eh? He beats Azdak.

ONE FARMER: Pull the Judge's robe off before we string him up!

Ironshirts and farmers pull the robe off Azdak. His torn underwear becomes visible. Then someone kicks him.

AN IRONSHIRT *pushing him on to someone else*: Anyone want a bundle of Justice? Here it is!

Accompanied by shouts of 'It's all yours!' and 'I don't want it!' they hurl Azdak back and forth until he breaks down. Then he is hauled up and dragged under the noose.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *who, during the 'ball-game', has been clapping her hands hysterically*: I disliked that man from the moment I first saw him.

AZDAK *covered in blood, panting*: I can't see. Give me a rag.

THE OTHER IRONSHIRT: What is it you want to see?

AZDAK: You, you dogs! He *wipes the blood out of his eyes with his shirt*. Good morning, dogs! How are you, dogs? How's the dog world? Does it stink good? Have you got another boot to lick? Are you back at each other's throats, dogs?

Enter a dust-covered rider accompanied by a corporal. He takes some documents from a leather case and looks through them. He interrupts.

THE RIDER: Stop! I bring a despatch from the Grand Duke, containing the latest appointments.

THE CORPORAL *bellows*: Atten - shun!

All jump to attention.

THE RIDER: Of the new Judge it says: We appoint a man whom we have to thank for the saving of a life of the utmost importance to the country. A certain Azdak in Nukha. Which is he?

SHAUVA *pointing*: That's him on the gallows, Your Excellency.

THE CORPORAL *bellowing*: What's going on here?

THE IRONSHIRT: I ask to be allowed to report that His Worship has already been His Worship. He was declared the enemy of the Grand Duke only on these farmers' denunciation.

THE CORPORAL *pointing at the farmers*: March them off! *They are marched off, bowing incessantly.* See to it that His Worship is exposed to no more indignities.

Exit the rider with the corporal.

THE COOK *to Shawva*: She clapped her hands! I hope he saw it!

THE FIRST LAWYER: This is a catastrophe.

Azdak has fainted. Coming to, he is dressed again in a Judge's robe. He walks away, swaying, from the group of Ironshirts.

THE IRONSHIRTS: Don't take it amiss, Your Worship. What are Your Worship's wishes?

AZDAK: Nothing, fellow dogs. An occasional boot to lick. *To Shawva*: I pardon you. *He is unchained.* Fetch me some of the red wine. The sweetest. *Exit Shawva.* Get out of here, I've got to judge a case. *The Ironshirts go. Shawva returns with a jug of wine. Azdak takes deep gulps.* Get me something for my backside. *Shawva brings the Statute Book and puts it on the Judge's seat. Azdak sits on it.* I receive! *The faces of the prosecutors, among whom a worried council has been held, show smiles of relief. They whisper.*

THE COOK: Oh dear!

SIMON: 'A well can't be filled with dew!' they say.

THE LAWYERS *approaching Azdak, who stands up expectantly*: An absolutely ridiculous case, Your Worship. The accused has abducted the child and refuses to hand it over.

AZDAK *stretching out his hand, and glancing at Grusha*: A most attractive person. *He receives more money*. I open the proceedings and demand the absolute truth. *To Grusha*: Especially from you.

THE FIRST LAWYER: High Court of Justice! Blood, as the saying goes, is thicker than water. This old proverb . . .

AZDAK: The Court wants to know the lawyer's fee.

THE FIRST LAWYER *surprised*: I beg your pardon? *Azduk rubs his thumb and index finger*. Oh, I see. 500 piastres, Your Worship, is the answer to the Court's somewhat unusual question.

AZDAK: Did you hear? The question is unusual. I ask it because I listen to you in a quite different way if I know you are good.

THE FIRST LAWYER *bowing*: Thank you, Your Worship. High Court of Justice! Of all bonds the bonds of blood are the strongest. Mother and child—is there a more intimate relationship? Can one tear a child from its mother? High Court of Justice! She has conceived it in the holy ecstasies of love. She has carried it in her womb. She has fed it with her blood. She has borne it with pain. High Court of Justice! It has been observed, Your Worship, how even the wild tigress, robbed of her young, roams restless through the mountains, reduced to a shadow. Nature herself . . .

AZDAK *interrupting, to Grusha*: What's your answer to all this and anything else the lawyer might have to say?

GRUSHA: He's mine.

AZDAK: Is that all? I hope you can prove it. In any case, I advise you to tell me why you think the child should be given to you.

GRUSHA: I've brought him up 'according to my best knowledge and conscience'. I always found him something to eat. Most of the time he had a roof over his head. And I went to all sorts of trouble for him. I had expenses, too. I didn't think of my own comfort. I brought up the child to be friendly with everyone. And from the beginning I taught

him to work as well as he could. But he's still very small.

THE FIRST LAWYER: Your Worship, it is significant that the person herself doesn't claim any bond of blood between herself and this child.

AZDAK: The Court takes note.

THE FIRST LAWYER: Thank you, Your Worship. Please permit a woman who has suffered much—who has already lost her husband and now also has to fear the loss of her child—to address a few words to you. Her Highness, Natella Abashvili . . .

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE *quietly*: A most cruel fate, sir, forces me to ask you to return my beloved child. It's not for me to describe to you the tortures of a bereaved mother's soul, the anxiety, the sleepless nights, the . . .

THE SECOND LAWYER *exploding*: It's outrageous the way this woman is treated. She's not allowed to enter her husband's palace. The revenue of her estates is blocked. She is told cold-bloodedly that it's tied to the heir. She can't do anything without the child. She can't even pay her lawyers. *To the first lawyer who, desperate about this outburst, makes frantic gestures to stop him speaking*: Dear Illo Shuboladze, why shouldn't it be divulged now that it's the Abashvili estates that are at stake?

THE FIRST LAWYER: Please, Honoured Sandro Oboladze! We had agreed . . . *To Azdak*: Of course it is correct that the trial will also decide whether our noble client will obtain the right to dispose of the large Abashvili estates. I say 'also' on purpose, because in the foreground stands the human tragedy of a mother, as Natella Abashvili has rightly explained at the beginning of her moving statement. Even if Michael Abashvili were *not* the heir to the estates, he would still be the dearly beloved child of my client.

AZDAK: Stop! The Court is touched by the mention of the estates. It's a proof of human feeling.

THE SECOND LAWYER: Thanks, Your Worship. Dear Illo Shuboladze, in any case we can prove that the person who

took possession of the child is not the child's mother. Permit me to lay before the Court the bare facts. By an unfortunate chain of circumstances, the child, Michael Abashvili, was left behind while his mother was making her escape. Grusha, the Palace kitchenmaid, was present on this Easter Sunday and was observed busying herself with the child . . .

THE COOK: All her mistress was thinking about was what kind of dresses she would take along.

THE SECOND LAWYER *unmoved*: Almost a year later Grusha turned up in a mountain village with a child, and there entered into matrimony with . . .

AZDAK: How did you get into that mountain village?

GRUSHA: On foot, Your Worship. And he was mine.

SIMON: I am the father, Your Worship.

THE COOK: I had him in my care for five piastres, Your Worship.

THE SECOND LAWYER: This man is engaged to Grusha, High Court of Justice, and for this reason his testimony is not reliable.

AZDAK: Are you the man she married in the mountain village?

SIMON: No, Your Worship, she married a peasant.

AZDAK *winking at Grusha*: Why? *Pointing at Simon*: Isn't he any good in bed? Tell the truth.

GRUSHA: We didn't get that far. I married because of the child, so that he should have a roof over his head. *Pointing at Simon*. He was in the war, Your Worship.

AZDAK: And now he wants you again, eh?

SIMON: I want to state in evidence . . .

GRUSHA *angrily*: I am no longer free, Your Worship.

AZDAK: And the child, you claim, is the result of whoring? *Grusha does not answer*. I'm going to ask you a question: What kind of child is it? Is it one of those ragged street-urchins? Or is it a child from a well-to-do family?

GRUSHA *angrily*: It's an ordinary child.

AZDAK: I mean, did he have fine features from the beginning?

GRUSHA: He had a nose in his face.

AZDAK: He had a nose in his face. I consider that answer of yours to be important. They say of me that once, before passing judgment, I went out and sniffed at a rosebush. Tricks of this kind are necessary nowadays. I'll cut things short now, and listen no longer to your lies. *To Grusha:* Especially yours. *To the group of defendants:* I can imagine what you've cooked up between you to cheat me. I know you. You're swindlers.

GRUSHA *suddenly*: I can quite understand your wanting to cut it short, having seen what you received!

AZDAK: Shut up! Did I receive anything from you?

GRUSHA *while the cook tries to restrain her*: Because I haven't got anything. •

AZDAK: Quite true. I never get a thing from starvelings. I might just as well starve myself. You want justice, but do you want to pay for it? When you go to the butcher you know you have to pay. But to the Judge you go as though to a funeral supper.

SIMON *loudly*: 'When the horse was shod, the horsefly stretched out its leg', as the saying is.

AZDAK *eagerly accepting the challenge*: 'Better a treasure in the sewer than a stone in the mountain stream.'

SIMON: '“A fine day. Let's go fishing,” said the angler to the worm.'

AZDAK: '“I'm my own master,” said the servant, and cut off his foot.'

SIMON: '“I love you like a father,” said the Czar to the peasant, and had the Czarevitch's head chopped off.'

AZDAK: 'The fool's worst enemy is himself.'

SIMON: But 'a fart has no nose'.

AZDAK: Fined ten piastres for indecent language in Court. That'll teach you what Justice is.

GRUSHA: That's a fine kind of Justice. You jump on us because we don't talk so refined as that lot with their lawyers.

AZDAK: Exactly. The likes of you are too stupid. It's only right that you should get it in the neck.

GRUSHA: Because you want to pass the child on to her. She who is too refined even to know how to change its nappies! You don't know any more about Justice than I do, that's clear.

AZDAK: There's something in that. I'm an ignorant man. I haven't even a decent pair of trousers under my robe. See for yourself. With me, everything goes on food and drink. I was educated in a convent school. Come to think of it, I'll fine you ten piastres, too. For contempt of Court. What's more, you're a very silly girl to turn me against you, instead of making eyes at me and wagging your backside a bit to keep me in a tood temper. Twenty piastres!

GRUSHA: Even if it were thirty, I'd tell you what I think of your justice, you drunken onion! How dare you talk to me as though you were the cracked Isaiah on the church window! When they pulled you out of your mother, it wasn't planned that you'd rap her over the knuckles for pinching a little bowl of corn from somewhere! Aren't you ashamed of yourself when you see how afraid I am of you? But you've let yourself become their servant. So that their houses are not taken away, because they've stolen them. Since when do houses belong to bed-bugs? But you're on the look-out, otherwise they couldn't drag our men into their wars. You bribe-taker!

Azduk gets up. He begins to beam. With a little hammer he knocks on the table half-heartedly as if to get silence. But as Grusha's scolding continues, he only beats time with it.

I've no respect for you. No more than for a thief or a murderer with a knife, who does what he wants. You can take the child away from me, a hundred against one, but I tell you one thing: for a profession like yours, they ought to choose only bloodsuckers and men who rape children. As a punishment. To make them sit in judgment over their fellow men, which is worse than swinging from the gallows.

AZDAK *sitting down*: Now it will be thirty! And I won't go on brawling with you as though we were in a tavern. What would happen to my dignity as a Judge? I've lost all interest

in your case. Where's the couple who wanted a divorce?
To Shawva: Bring them in. This case is adjourned for fifteen minutes.

THE FIRST LAWYER *to the Governor's wife*: Without producing any more evidence, Madam, we have the verdict in the bag.

THE COOK *to Grusha*: You've gone and spoiled your chances with him. You won't get the child now.

Enter a very old couple.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Shalva, my smelling salts!

AZDAK: I receive. *The old couple do not understand.* I hear you want to be divorced. How long have you been living together?

THE OLD WOMAN: Forty years, Your Worship.

AZDAK: And why d'you want a divorce?

THE OLD MAN: We don't like each other, Your Worship.

AZDAK: Since when?

THE OLD WOMAN: Oh, from the very beginning, Your Worship.

AZDAK: I'll consider your case and deliver my verdict when I'm finished with the other one. *Shawva leads them into the background.* I need the child. *He beckons Grusha towards him and bends not unkindly towards her.* I've noticed that you have a soft spot for justice. I don't believe he's your child, but if he were yours, woman, wouldn't you want him to be rich? You'd only have to say he isn't yours and at once he'd have a palace, scores of horses in his stable, scores of beggars on his doorstep, scores of soldiers in his service, and scores of petitioners in his courtyard. Now, what d'you say? Don't you want him to be rich?

Grusha is silent.

THE SINGER: Listen now to what the angry girl thought, but didn't say. *He sings*:

He who wears the shoes of gold
 Tramples on the weak and old
 Does evil all day long
 And mocks at wrong.

O to carry as one's own
Heavy is the heart of stone.
'The power to do ill
Wears out the will.

Hunger he will dread
Not those who go unfed:
Fear the fall of night
But not the light.

AZDAK: I think I understand you, woman.

GRUSHA: I won't give him away. I've brought him up, and he knows me.

Enter Shauva with the child.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: It's in rags!

GRUSHA: That's not true. I wasn't given the time to put on his good shirt.

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: It's been in a pig-stye.

GRUSHA *furious*: I'm no pig, but there are others who are. Where did you leave your child?

THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE: I'll let you have it, you vulgar person. *She is about to throw herself on Grusha, but is restrained by her lawyers.* She's a criminal! She must be whipped! Right away!

THE SECOND LAWYER *holding his hand over her mouth*: Most gracious Natella Abashvili, you promised . . . Your Worship, the plaintiff's nerves . . .

AZDAK: Plaintiff and defendant! The Court has listened to your case, and has come to no decision as to who the real mother of this child is. I as Judge have the duty of choosing a mother for the child. I'll make a test. Shauva, get a piece of chalk and draw a circle on the floor. *Shauva does so.* Now place the child in the centre. *Shauva puts Michael, who smiles at Grusha, in the centre of the circle.* Plaintiff and defendant, stand near the circle, both of you. *The Governor's wife and Grusha step up to the circle.* Now each of you take the child by a hand. The true mother is she who has the strength to pull the child out of the circle, towards herself.

THE SECOND LAWYER *quickly*: High Court of Justice, I protest! I object that the fate of the great Abashvili estates, which are bound up with the child as the heir, should be made dependent on such a doubtful wrestling match. Moreover, my client does not command the same physical strength as this person, who is accustomed to physical work.

AZDAK: She looks pretty well fed to me. Pull!

The Governor's wife pulls the child out of the circle to her side. Grusha has let it go and stands aghast.

THE FIRST LAWYER *congratulating the Governor's wife*: What did I say! The bonds of blood!

AZDAK *to Grusha*: What's the matter with you? You didn't pull!

GRUSHA: I didn't hold on to him. *She runs to Azdak*. Your Worship, I take back everything I said against you. I ask your forgiveness. If I could just keep him until he can speak properly. He knows only a few words.

AZDAK: Don't influence the Court! I bet you know only twenty yourself. All right, I'll do the test once more, to make certain.

The two women take up positions again.

AZDAK: Pull!

Again Grusha lets go of the child.

GRUSHA *in despair*: I've brought him up! Am I to tear him to pieces? I can't do it!

AZDAK *rising*: And in this manner the Court has established the true mother. *To Grusha*: Take your child and be off with it. I advise you not to stay in town with him. *To the Governor's wife*: And you disappear before I fine you for fraud. Your estates fall to the city. A playground for children will be made out of them. They need one, and I have decided it shall be called after me—The Garden of Azdak.

The Governor's wife has fainted and is carried out by the Adjutant. Her lawyers have preceded her. Grusha stands motionless. Shaiwa leads the child towards her.

AZDAK: Now I'll take off this Judge's robe—it has become

too hot for me. I'm not cut out for a hero. But I invite you all to a little farewell dance, outside on the meadow. Oh, I had almost forgotten something in my excitement. I haven't signed the decree for divorce.

Using the Judge's seat as a table, he writes something on a piece of paper and prepares to leave. Dance music has started.

SHAUVA *having read what is on the paper*. But that's not right.

You haven't divorced the old couple. You've divorced Grusha from her husband.

AZDAK: Have I divorced the wrong ones? I'm sorry, but it'll have to stand. I never retract anything. If I did, there'd be no law and order. *To the old couple*: Instead, I'll invite you to my feast. You won't mind dancing with each other. *To Grusha and Simon*: I've still got 40 piastres coming from you.

SIMON *pulling out his purse*: That's cheap, Your Worship. And many thanks.

AZDAK *pocketing the money*: I'll need it.

GRUSHA: So we'd better leave town tonight, eh, Michael? *About to take the child on her back*. *To Simon*: You like him?

SIMON *taking the child on his back*: With my respects, I like him.

GRUSHA: And now I can tell you: I took him because on that Easter Sunday I got engaged to you. And so it is a child of love. Michael, let's dance.

She dances with Michael. Simon dances with the cook. The old couple dance with each other. Azdak stands lost in thought. The dancers soon hide him from view. Occasionally he is seen again, but less and less as more couples enter and join the dance.

THE SINGER

And after this evening Azdak disappeared and was never seen again.

But the people of Grusinia did not forget him and often remembered

His time of Judgment as a brief

Golden Age that was almost just.

The dancing couples dance out. Azdak has disappeared.

But you, who have listened to the story of the Chalk
Circle

Take note of the meaning of the ancient song:

That what there is shall belong to those who are good for
it, thus

The children to the maternal, that they thrive;

The carriages to good drivers, that they are driven well;

And the valley to the waterers, that it shall bear fruit.

Notes and Variants

Notes and Variants

THE VISIONS OF SIMONE MACHARD

Texts by Brecht

THE VISIONS OF SIMONE MACHARD

Little Simone Machard works for the hostellerie at a small town called Saint-Martin in central France. She is there to help out, primarily in connection with the hotel petrol pump; the hotel also runs a transport business. It is June 1940; the Nazis have taken Paris; streams of refugees are pouring across central France and passing through Saint-Martin.

Simone's seventeen-year-old brother is at the front; she loves him dearly and is sure that he is involved in the fighting. Meanwhile in the village and in the hotel she finds that at this point, in the middle of a great national disaster, high and low alike can think of nothing but themselves. It is now that she reads a book given her by her teacher, which contains the story of the Maid of Orleans, greatest of all French patriots.

During those feverish nights, with the leading Germans already up to the Loire, she is moved by the course of events to dream that she is herself Saint Joan. An angel appears to her from the garage roof and tells her that she has been chosen to save France. He has the features of her soldier brother André. In her dream the legend of the book mingles with the reality of the little hotel. The hotel's *patron* is suddenly a *connétable* of the royal court; the hotel staff, the drivers and the old night porter, wear armour and form a little unit of feudal soldiery who escort her to the king; while in the king himself she recognizes the spineless local mayor.

Thereafter Simone at the hostellerie undergoes a miniature version of the terrible and uplifting fate of Joan of Arc, and again and again in her dreams she turns into the saint.

She dreams that the angel gives her an invisible drum. He tells her that this drum is the soil of France, and that in an

emergency the soil of France—her drum—will resound, summoning the people to resist France's enemies. In her role as a great popular leader she then in her dream goes to the king, holds confidential talks with the king-mayor and warns him not to spend his time playing cards with his nobles, the *patron-connétable* and the other luminaries of Saint-Martin, but instead to attend to the arming and feeding of the people. The people, for their part, are called on to fight wholeheartedly. In this way she manages to unite king, people and nobles and to crown the king-mayor in Rheims.

In the real world of the hotel, when the *patron* and his drivers simply wish to run away from the Germans, she fetches the mayor and has the hotel forced to hand over its stocks of food to the municipality rather than remove them to the interior, while the drivers and their lorries are made to evacuate the refugees who are blocking the French army from using the roads.

(The *patron* allows the child to have her way because at least this stops his hostellerie from being looted, and the drivers help her because they sympathize with her anxiety for her brother at the front.)

But when she calls for the hostellerie's secret stocks of petrol to be destroyed to prevent them from falling into enemy hands she is going too far, and the *patron's* mother dismisses her.

That night she dreams the chapter in her book in which the Maid, following her initial victories, encounters the first problems in her own ranks. Although Paris is still in enemy hands she is not given command of a fresh army. The king-mayor and the *patron-connétable* ennoble her, admittedly, but they take away her sword. Once more the angel appears on the garage roof and she has to tell him that she has been dismissed. Severely the angel recommends her to stick to her course and not, for instance, to let the petrol fall into the hands of the Germans, or else their murderous tanks will be able to keep on thrusting ahead.

A few days later the Germans enter Saint-Martin. The

patron has fled. His mother and old Captain Beleire, a Laval supporter and vineyard owner, wish to come to terms with the victorious Germans at any price. To prove that they mean to collaborate they tell the German commandant that the petrol is hidden in the brickworks. But the brickworks is already ablaze when the Germans get there. Simone has set fire to it. This act of sabotage threatens the new and promising Franco-German collaboration. Wanted: the incendiarist.

In a disturbing dream Simone once again encounters the heroic Joan of the legend, now deserted by her own side, because the Queen Mother Isabeau and the Duke of Burgundy have asserted themselves at Court and are trying to arrange an armistice with the enemy. The Queen Mother looks just like the mother of the *patron*, while the Duke of Burgundy is like the *connétable*. Only Simone, now wide awake, cannot believe this dream. And when on the *patron's* return he feels sorry for her, and he and the drivers want to take her away, she insists on staying. How is her brother to find her if and when he returns? So she is denounced to the Germans and arrested.

In a final vision Simone dreams that she, Joan, has been taken captive and handed over by the enemy to an ecclesiastical court which has to decide whether the voices which she heard summoning her to resist the enemy came in fact from God or from the devil. She is tragically shocked to find that the noble judges who condemn her to the stake for having spoken with the devil's voice only are all people whom she knows: the mayor, the Captain, the *patron*, with the *patron's* mother putting the case for the prosecution.

Simone dreams this last dream in prison, and the following morning the Germans hand her back to the French. Her friends among the hotel staff are hopeful for her. They feel that a French official inquiry into the fire must be bound to admit the patriotic nature of her motives. But there are good reasons why the German attitude should be so generous. The Germans think it undesirable that there should have been an act of sabotage which might act as a precedent for others.

And shooting a child would jeopardize the collaboration they so badly need. So they have agreed with their French friends that the case should be sidetracked.

Simone has to hear the *patron* and his mother, her employers, giving evidence against her, while the mayor leaves her to her fate. Numb with shock, she learns that a French court finds that her action was not undertaken for patriotic reasons, but that she caused the fire for purely personal motives, as a mischievous act of revenge for her dismissal. She is sent for corrective training.

The people, however, are not fooled. When the *patron* returns to the hostellerie he finds that his staff have left. And as Simone is being led away after the verdict Saint-Martin is shaken by a bombing attack. English planes are carrying on the struggle.

For Simone these explosions have a special meaning. Did her dream angel not tell her that the soil of France was her invisible drum, whose sound would bring the sons of France hurrying to defend it? And here is French soil reverberating. It is the angel, her brother André, who has sent her the planes. (N.B.: Interwoven with the play is the delicate story of little Simone's relations with a wounded soldier, one of her brother's friends.)

[GW *Schriften zum Theater* 3, pp. 1181-5. This plan for the play, which may have been conceived as a film treatment, differs from our text, particularly in its ending, which is unlike that in any other version. Nowhere else is the Captain specifically described as being old, while the identification of the drum with the soil of France is also unusually clearly made. Note that there is no mention of the refugees in the gymnasium.]

WORKING PLAN

1. *the germans invade france. at the hostellerie 'au relais' it is business as usual, but simone machard is reading a book of legends.*

- (a) two drivers see bombs, an old man mends tyres, a soldier licks his wounds, a child reads a book.
 - (b) the colonel does not wish to be greeted.
 - (c) conversation about the treachery of the top people, about visions, hordes of refugees, headaches, teachers and wine.
 - (d) soldiers get their dixie half-filled with lentils. simone's brother is unknown.
 - (e) the *patron* defends his stocks and tells simone to give the colonel his bill.
 - (f) the hotel has a star, the staff remain cool.
 - (g) the mayor is bawled out by the colonel because the roads are blocked.
 - (h) the mayor wants lorries for the refugees, the *patron* has no petrol, the staff confirm it, the captain needs the lorries for his barrels of wine, the war is lost.
 - (i) only a miracle can save france, in the mayor's view; the staff say 'simone thinks one will take place'.
2. *joan of arc, summoned by divine voices, crowns the king in rheims and unites all frenchmen against the hereditary foe.*
- (a) the angel calls joan and gives her the task.
 - (b) she gets helmet and bayonet.
 - (c) the ajaxes escort her, and battles are won.
 - (d) she recognizes the king.
 - (e) her argument with the king.
 - (f) she crowns him.
3. *simone gets a hearing for the mayor, and the hotel is saved.*
- (a) the germans have crossed the loire, the staff has breakfast, the *patron* has certain wishes, the staff has breakfast, simone disappears.
 - (b) the *patron* is horrified to find that he is not liked. simone is looked for by her parents.
 - (c) the mayor arrives with soldiers, having been fetched by simone. the lorries are requisitioned but the mayor weakens.

- (d) simone supports him and arranges everything, aided by madame mère. the soldiers are given wine, and leave for the front. the village is given the food stocks, and simone's parents are the first.
 - (e) the wave of patriotism infects the *patron*. handshake and toast. the petrol must be saved, as simone said.
 - (f) the *patron* has departed. madame mère fires simone. the mayor admires the tip.
4. *joan, rewarded by the court but dismissed in her native village, is encouraged by her voices to continue the struggle.*
- (a) although the enemy is still in her country, joan can get no more troops.
 - (b) instead she is thanked for her services. she is knighted with her own sword.
 - (c) but her sword is not returned to her; the king gives it to the connétable as a mark of gratitude.
 - (d) the angel appears and tells her to carry on the struggle.
5. *the germans occupy the village. simone sets fire to the petrol.*
- (a) madame mère receives the german commandant. 'he's human like the rest of us'.
 - (b) the captain harangues the staff. in future discipline will prevail.
 - (c) simone hears the captain warning the mayor not to conceal the existence of the petrol in the brickworks.
 - (d) simone tells the mayor of her plan to set fire to the brickworks. he seems to approve.
 - (e) the opponents also get on at a low level. the commandant's batman talks with the wounded soldier.
 - (f) the gentry enter the yard to inspect the brickworks. a good understanding prevails.
 - (g) the brickworks are ablaze.
6. *simone is surrendered by the top people.*
- (a) simone's parents come to thank her: as a result of her generous action her father has got the job with the council.

- (b) the *patron* returns. he is embarrassed by the parents' tributes: 'your hotel is france in miniature'. père gustave accompanies him inside.

daydream

- (a) the maid's messenger is kept from the king. why?
 - (b) because the english are within. and what is being talked about?
 - (c) the maid. and what else?
 - (d) the fact that she is to blame for the war.
 - (e) so she isn't relieved, but her troops are thrown in again. and so she is captured.
 - (f) but the angel appears once more and assures her that everything she did was right, and warns her to stick to her mission.
6. *simone is surrendered by the top people, continued.*
- (c) the drivers urge simone to flee. she stands by her faith in the *patron*.
 - (d) then the *patron* comes out too and urges her to flee.
 - (e) simone is seized by panic, and does flee.
 - (f) the german commandant and the french gentry enter the yard and a search is made for simone. she is not there. the commandant is angry and goes back indoors.
 - (g) sigh of relief from the gentry. simone is standing in the yard. she has come back. they implore her. she refuses to flee. the commandant arrives. simone: it's me.
7. *the english hand joan over to an ecclesiastical court consisting of frenchmen, which interrogates her about the angel.*
- (a) the english bring joan before the ecclesiastical court. they ask for a report as to whether the voices come from god or from the devil.
 - (b) the connétable, the burgundian and the renegade colonel don their ecclesiastical robes.
 - (c) the ecclesiastical court discusses the voices' origin with joan and finds them devilish.

8. *trial of simone machard by the authorities of her village. she is found not guilty of the crime of sabotage but is sent to the pious sisters' corrective institution on the grounds of incendiarism and vindictiveness.*

- (a) the germans hand simone back.
- (b) the commission goes out of its way to whitewash her of any accusation of sabotaging the germans.
- (c) the staff welcome this attitude on the court's part and hope for her release.
- (d) the remainder of the hearing is devoted to simone's attitude to her employers, particularly on the day of the great panic.
- (e) questioned about her motives for incendiarism she continues to insist that she did it for france's sake.
- (f) she is forced however to admit that she really wanted to save the petrol from its owners.
- (g) she is therefore handed over to the pious sisters of sainte-madeleine for correction.
- (h) while she says good-bye in the yard to the staff and to her parents the commission goes off to report to the german commandant.

[BBA 1204/1-3. This is one of the most elaborately worked out of all Brecht's characteristic structural plans. It is mounted on card, with scenes 1-8 (and their sub-headings) forming eight parallel columns. There are pencilled figures by Brecht giving (apparently) the estimated duration of each sub-scene, and it seems altogether probable that the collaborators used it as a basis for their first script.]

THE DREAMS

The dreams in which Simone relives the St Joan legend can be made intelligible to audiences unaware of the legend by the large-scale projection of individual pages from the book, possibly including woodcut illustrations.

For the *first dream*: 'Summoned by an angel to save France,

Joan unites the French by crowning Charles VII king in the city of Rheims.'

For the *second dream*: 'Following some brilliant victories, Joan is ennobled. However, she has powerful enemies at court who would like to see an armistice.'

For the *third dream*: 'Betrayed into enemy hands, Joan is handed over to an ecclesiastical court which condemns her to death.'

[GW *Schriften zum Theater* 3, p. 1185. These captions can be compared with those in the plans quoted in the Editorial Note, below. Illustrations reproduced from old illuminated manuscripts are gummed into one or two of Brecht's typescripts of the play.]

FIRST DREAM OF SIMONE MACHARD (DURING THE NIGHT OF 14/15 JUNE)

I was addressed from the garage roof in a loud voice as 'Joan!', went immediately out into the yard and saw *the angel* on the roof of the garage. He waved to me in friendly fashion and told me that I had been called to defeat France's enemies. He ordered me to go straightway to Châlons and crown the king, as I had read in the book. After the angel had disappeared once more the soldier came out of the garage towards me and handed me sword and helmet. The former looked like a bayonet. I asked whether I should clean it for him but he answered that it was against the enemies of France. Thereupon I felt as if I were standing in green countryside. A strong wind was blowing and the sky was like it is between four and five in the morning when you go to mass. Then I saw how the earth, together with all the meadows and poplars upon it, curved as if it were a ball, and how the enemy loomed up in a mighty procession without end. In front rode the drummer with a voice like a wolf and his drum was stretched with a Jew's skin; a vulture perched on his shoulder with the features of Farouche the banker from Lyons. Close behind

him came the Marshal Incendiarist. He went on foot, a fat clown, in seven uniforms and in none of them did he look human. Above these two devils was a canopy of newsprint, so it was easy for me to recognize them. Behind them rode the remaining executioners and marshals, with countenances for the most part like the backsides of plucked chickens, and behind them drove an endless procession of guns and tanks and railway trains, also automobiles on which were altars or torture chambers, for everything was on wheels.

[BBA 118-19. More than anything else, this draft of the first dream, part of which was taken into the play (p. 20), links the 'Visions' of the play's title with the series of poetic 'Visions' written by Brecht from 1938 on. See the notes to *Poems 1913-1956* (hardback edition) pp. 510-11. The drummer is Hitler, the marshal Hermann Goering, whom the Communists held responsible for the Reichstag fire of 1933.]

TWO CHARACTERS

Scene 1

SIMONE

All this being ordered hither and thither remains characteristic of the little maid-of-all-work so long as the hither and the thither are still undefined, and the hither and thither is not contrasted with something else. This would be the case were she, for instance, to be rent apart between the wishes of those above her and the needs of those below—for she is exploited from on top and from underneath—and if, to form the contrast, there were something at some particularly rending moment to be observed about TANKS that was of special worry and concern to her.

Scene 6

[*our scene 3b*]

THE PATRON

The *patron* can only develop into a character if he acquires an

evolution of his own in this scene. His confrontation with the staff becomes manly as a result of the invasion. The invasion offers him the opportunity to score a 'victory', but he shouldn't be too eager to pick up this particular laurel wreath. It is essential that he should fall into a rage on hearing that his brickworks has been destroyed; this is not the kind of war he wants to wage. Waging it in such way destroys the point of war. Patriotic feelings raise their head later, as inhibitions. How is it going to look if he hands a French citizen over to the Germans? That would be setting a bad example.

[BBA 1190/50. For the renumbering of scenes, see the Editorial Note.]

Editorial Note

I. GENERAL

When Brecht and Feuchtwanger discussed collaborating on a play at the end of October 1942 they considered various possibilities before settling on a St Joan story:

A confused person has dreams in which the characters of the patriotic legend take on features of her superiors, and she learns how and why those superiors are waging their war, and how long for.

Thus the note in Brecht's journal, which calls the project *Saint Joan of Vitry* (*The Voices*). According to Feuchtwanger's recollection many years later the heroine was originally to be called Odette, but in what must be one of the earliest plans she is Jeanne Gotard. This was for a play of eleven scenes, starting:

1. the germans attack france. jeanne gotard is given an old book with the story of jeanne d'arc.
2. joan of arc calls on the king.
3. jeanne gotard hides the petrol stocks from the advancing german tanks.

—and finishing:

7. incendiarism of jeanne gotard.
8. respectable frenchmen talk to respectable englishmen.
9. arrest of jeanne gotard.
10. initiation of proceedings against joan of arc.
11. condemnation of jeanne gotard by a french court.

What seems like the beginning of a treatment in Brecht's typing is headed *Saint Joan of Vitry* and goes as follows:

In Vitry, a small town in Champagne, during the German invasion of 1940, a young girl by the name of Jeanne Gotard dreamt a strange dream lasting five consecutive nights. By day she worked her father's petrol pump, he being a soldier serving in the Maginot Line. The schoolmaster across the way had lent her an old book with the illustrated story of Joan of Arc, and so at night she dreamt she was Joan. In her dreams however the historical events reported in the book were intermingled with memories of certain incidents at the petrol station, so that the

story of the saint displayed strange variations which not only made a profound impression on those listeners to whom she recounted her nightly experiences but would also certainly have interested an historian, if such a person had been present. In her dreams she appeared armed with bayonet and steel helmet, but the rest of her clothes were those that she wore every day, while the historical personalities with whom she had to deal—king, marshals, cardinals and ordinary people—bore the faces of familiar personalities of the town of Vitry, such as visited the petrol station in the daytime. Coulange the banker merely wore a plumed hat, the mayor of the town simply a flowing cloak over his grey suit . . .

A nine-scene version of the plan eliminates the missing scenes 4–6 of the scheme given above, and renames the heroine Michèle. Thus:

1. the germans attack france. michèle gotard reads a patriotic legend.
2. joan of arc, summoned by divine voices, crowns the king in rheims and unites all frenchmen against the hereditary foe.
3. michèle saves stocks from the advancing german tanks.
4. joan of arc, rewarded by the mighty and dismissed in her native village, is moved by the divine voices to continue the struggle.
5. michèle's incendiarism.
6. highly-placed frenchmen talk to highly-placed englishmen.
7. michèle is betrayed and is arrested by the germans; however, certain circles arrange for her to come before a french court.
8. joan is perturbed by the angel's failure to appear, the high court meets and questions her about the voices.
9. condemnation of michèle gotard by a french court.

With the much more elaborately worked out plan given above on pp. 244–8 Michèle Gotard finally became Simone Machard, but the English decision to hand Joan of Arc over for trial by her own people—which Feuchtwanger saw as the pivotal point of the play—got swallowed in the next scene. None the less this eight-scene version seems to have served as the basis for the actual writing of the play.

Brecht's first typescript is in eight scenes, bearing the dates 28.12.42 at scene 5 and Jan 43 near the end; a note in his handwriting calls it 'first script, written in California'. An almost en-

tirely rewritten script follows, which is not in Brecht's typing and bears corrections by his and other hands; it was among his collaborator Ruth Berlau's papers and is headed 'a play in two acts by Bertolt Brecht and Lion Feuchtwanger' with three suggested English titles: *Simone Hears Voices*, *St Joan in Vichy* and *The Nights of St Joan*. Feuchtwanger seems to have used a copy of this, lacking Brecht's last revisions, for a third, slightly modified version which he headed 'a play in eight scenes by Bertolt Brecht and Lion Feuchtwanger' and sent to Elisabeth Hauptmann in Berlin a year before Brecht's death; it bears no marks by Brecht. The fourth and final script derives likewise from the rewritten version; it dates from 1946 and contains none of Feuchtwanger's modifications, but is heavily corrected by Brecht, who at some points went back to the first version. This is the script which was used for the German collected edition and accordingly is the basis of our own text. We shall refer to them respectively as the first version, the Berlau script, the Feuchtwanger script and the 1946 or final version.

For Brecht there were two principal points of uncertainty in the writing of it. The first was the question of Simone's age; he found himself wanting to make her younger and younger ('mainly because i cannot give a motive for her patriotism', he noted in his journal), yet by doing so he destroyed her interest as a character. 'The difficulty is', he noted on 8 December 1942 of his struggle with the 'Handshake' scene,

i'm writing the scene with no picture of the principal part, simone. originally i saw her as a somewhat ungainly, mentally retarded and inhibited person; then it seemed more practical to use a child, so i'm left with the bare functions and nothing to offset them with in the way of individuality.

The other problem was the ending, which is unresolved in the first script and may well have been left in some confusion when Brecht went off to New York on 8 February. As will be seen from the detailed analysis that follows, he envisaged two alternative solutions, arguing (in the journal entry for 5 January) that

the correct version is unperformable. in reality of course the wendells [i.e. the De Wendels of the Schneider arms firm] and pétains made use of the defeat and the foreign occupation to do down their social opponents. simone accordingly would need to be released by the germans (following false evidence by the staff

of the hostellerie) then handed over to the corrective institution by madame mère and captain fétain for subversive activities. in the performable version this would have to be blurred over; condemning simone for incendiarism due to her hatred of the *patron* means at the same time saving her from execution by the germans.

It was only in the final version that he seems to have settled for the less blurred alternative.

But besides these a number of other important variables can be observed in the scripts, though Brecht himself had nothing to say about them. They are:

- (a) The identification of the angel with Simone's brother. At the beginning of the first version it is the Archangel Michael, while there is also a note saying 'the angel's voice is [? the voice] of the people'.
- (b) The characters of Maurice and Robert, who in the first version are brothers. There they are shown shirking the call-up, and Maurice has evidently refused to help move the refugees (as is made explicit in the Berlau script). However at the end of the Berlau (ii) and Feuchtwanger scripts they turn against the *Patron*. Not so in the final script.
- (c) The character of Père Gustave. He seems much more unpleasant in the earlier versions, bootlicking the *Patron* and giving evidence against Simone.
- (d) The role of the mayor, who compromises at a different stage in each version. Thus in the Feuchtwanger and Berlau (ii) versions of the Fourth Dream (i.e. our scene 4a) he is still defending Simone, whereas in the final text he is one of her judges.
- (e) The *Patron's* journey with the two truck drivers. In our version it is not explained how they came back, nor why they brought back the china and not the wines (initially the Captain's) nor what happened to such refugees as they found room for. In the other texts the party runs into the Germans and/or breaks down, but again it is far from clear what is really supposed to have happened.
- (f) The role of the refugees is heavily stressed in the final text, which brings in the notion of their being a 'mob' quartered in the village hall.
- (g) Simone's escape is exclusive to the last version, though she half-tries in the Berlau and Feuchtwanger scripts.

- (b) The placing of the Daydream varies. This was the section of the play which Feuchtwanger in a letter of 27 March 1943 told Brecht had displeased all with whom he had discussed it (William Dieterle, Hanns Eisler, Oskar Homolka and Berthold Viertel) and should therefore be cut.

Such points reflect a good deal of uncertainty in the authors' minds, and the effect is visible even in the final version, where the definition of the characters is further smudged by the occasional reallocation of lines. Besides this there is not only the altering of names—thus in the first script the mayor was Phillip [*sic*] Duclos, the *Patron* Henri Champon, his mother 'Madame Mère' and the captain Captain Bellair—but a basic insecurity about places and dates. In the earlier scripts the scope of the action embraced Saint-Nazaire, Tours and Lyons—places several hundred kilometres apart and all of them far from the Champagne country where the previous scheme of the play was laid. Again, where the final text puts Simone's village on one of the main roads from Paris to the South, the Berlau script puts it on the Paris-Bordeaux road. The cumulative effect of all these hesitations and improbabilities helps to weaken the play.

2. SCENE-BY-SCENE ACCOUNT

The following is a scene-by-scene account of the main changes. It uses the numbering of the final text with, in brackets, the numbers and titles of the corresponding eight-scene arrangement. It is followed by a short account of Feuchtwanger's novel *Simone*, which was a product of the play but, so far as we know, involved no collaboration by Brecht.

1. *The Book* (1)

The first version had Simone on stage from the start, reading her book; her present moves and business come from the Berlau script, which also changes the provenance of the book from 'the nuns' (first version) to 'the schoolmistress' and then, in Brecht's hand, to 'the *Patron*', as now. The soldier Georges's dialogue with Simone about the beauties of France was reworked more than once, and is altogether missing in the Feuchtwanger script. An addition to the Berlau script reads, in lieu of the lines from 'Is that what it says in the book?' to 'Do you have to go down to the village hall again . . .':

Simone nods

GEORGES: Perhaps they mean the cafés with their orange awnings or the *Halles* in the early morning, full of meat and vegetables.

SIMONE: What do you like best?

GEORGES: They say one's own fish, white bread and wine are best.

SIMONE: What's the most beautiful thing you've seen?

GEORGES: I don't know. In Saint-Malo, for instance, I saw the launching of the *Intrépide*, a big blue box for catching cod. We went to a bistro and drank so much *framboise* that my cousin Jean fell out of his swing-boat.

SIMONE: Was he hurt?

GEORGES: No, he fell on the fat proprietress. What do you like best?

SIMONE: When they give us milk rolls at school.

GEORGES: Yes, that's something that could stay the way it is. Same with playing bowls in the shade outside the mairie, wouldn't you say? And the women would be all right, particularly the girls in Lyons or Arles, say, pleasant ways they've got, but then you're not interested in that. Yes, there's quite a lot one could put up with.

SIMONE: And our hostellerie?

GEORGES: Just like France. Certain people spoil the whole picture so to speak.

The reference to the sappers which follows (with the mention of Simone's brother) derives from the same script, as does the dialogue between Père Gustave and the *Patron* (up to his exit on p. 8) and most of the ensuing detail about 'the gentleman with the trout' and his meal. Only part of this is in the Feuchtwanger script, while the first script goes almost straight from Georges's attempt to take away Simone's book to the sappers' actual entry on p. 8 (though it does make the point that Simone is holding down her brother's job while he is at the front). The fact that the brother is Saint-Martin's only volunteer comes from the Berlau script; the phrase 'And the people are the enemy' (p. 9) is from an addition to the 1946 version. Virtually everything from the Colonel's exit (p. 11) to the Mayor's entry (p. 12) is new in the Berlau script; in the first version the Mayor arrives before the Colonel leaves, and is bawled out for permitting the confusion on the roads; the Colonel threatening to report him to the Préfecture at Lyons.

Thereafter the first version moves straight from the Mayor's request for the lorries to his formal requisitioning of them (p. 13). It is at this point that the *Patron* states his prior obligation to the Captain and his wines, provoking the Mayor to speak of his duty to France.

PATRON: Don't talk about France. You're just using an opportunity to score off the Captain because he cut your wife at the Préfet's ball in return for your taking Simone out of his service so she might go to school . . .

This leads quickly into the Mayor's demand for the petrol too. From there down to Maurice's statement (p. 14) that they know nothing about the petrol the first version is like a draft of the final text. Thereafter:

MAYOR: So that's your answer? I see. Only a miracle can save France; it's rotten from top to bottom. *To Simone*: You've got a brother at the front; in the south, isn't he? Do you imagine he'll have any petrol for his tank? Jammed in the endless stream of refugees, he's no doubt waiting for a mortal attack by enemy dive-bombers. But I don't suppose you're any more likely than the others to tell me where I can get him some petrol, eh, Simone?

Simone stands motionless, then gives a dry sob and rushes away. Sighing, the Mayor turns and leaves.

Neither the Berlau nor the Feuchtwanger script has any mention of the petrol in this scene or the Dream which follows. The former has the final text from the Mayor's entry to the *Patron*'s 'We must talk in private' (p. 13); whereupon the Mayor replies:

No, Henri, we will no longer talk in private. I may be a bad mayor, I suppose, and have done wrong to shut an eye so often. But unless I can organize those twenty lorries for the refugees I don't know how I'll be able to look my son in the face when he gets back from the front. *He notices Simone*. Sending some of your food parcels to the village hall? You only filled the soldiers' dixie half full. I ought to have confiscated your stocks long ago.

PATRON *threateningly*: Try it and see.

MAYOR: How can the refugees get anywhere if they're robbed of their last sou all along the line?

PATRON: This is a restaurant, not a charitable institution. You can go, Simone.

Simone starts to go.

MAYOR *stops her. Calmly*: Any news from your brother?

Simone shakes her head.

MAYOR: I've not heard from my son either. *Quietly and bitterly to the others*: At this moment her brother can see the German tanks advancing towards him, Stukas above him, blocked roads behind him so that no reinforcements can get through to him; and here she is being expected to help exploit Frenchmen who are in trouble.

The *Patron* claims that this is undermining her respect for her employer, to which the Mayor replies 'I see', and so on to the end as in the final version.

First Dream of Simone Machard (2)

The Angel's opening speech in verse is in the first version, but not the brief dialogue between him and Simone which follows and identifies him with her brother André; a preliminary version of this is in the Berlau script. Simone's song, which had Saint-Nazaire in the first version, had Saint-Omer in the Berlau script and Rocamer in both the Feuchtwanger and the final scripts till Brecht restored Saint-Nazaire once again on the latter. Three of the four 'dream language' phrases on pp. 16, 18 and 21 are pen additions by Brecht to the final script, which already contained 'Okler greischt Burlapp' (p. 21). Two other nonsense remarks referred to in the stage directions were spelt out in the Berlau script; thus Simone's unintelligible reply on p. 18 is ('Allekiwist, Maurice') and Robert's remark (below) is ('Wihilirichi'). In the first version the whole scene is shorter. Thus after Simone's offer to clean Père Gustave's guns for him the *Patron* enters and Simone almost instantly beats her drum to summon the king with a version of her long speech on pp. 20-21. He thereupon enters, asks after her brother, confiscates the lorries and inquires about the petrol (which is not mentioned in the Berlau script). Why are the drivers lying, he asks.

SIMONE: They have to lie, or else they'll be called up, see? because the *Patron* will give up certifying that they're essential workers.

Then the sappers appear as on p. 21 and beat their dixies like bells, and the scene ends much as in the final text.

2. *The Handshakes* (3)

There is some characteristic geographical confusion in the first version, where the *Patron's* wines and china were to go to Saint-Nazaire and the refugees to Lyons (several hundred kilometres apart); then Lyons was changed to 'Vermillon', a place apparently invented by Brecht. The Mayor arrives in this version not with the town police but with the Sergeant from scene 1 and his two soldiers. Simone's ensuing explanation (to her mother and the *Patron*) is not included; it was worked out on the Berlau script. Then from where the Mayor weakens (p. 25) to the entry of Madame Soupeau everything is different, the drivers in particular being more uncooperative and the refugees not making an appearance:

MAYOR *weaker*: Monsieur Champon, I'm only doing my duty.

All I asked was for you to put your lorries at my disposal.

PATRON *yells*: What do you want my lorries for?

MAYOR: I told you. I'm going to shift the refugees.

SIMONE: The old people and children anyhow, so as to clear Route 74 for the troops in Lyons to move up.

PATRON *stares at her, then to the Mayor, nastily*: Have you got the drivers? I'm told my men won't drive.

MAYOR *to the drivers*: Are you really refusing to evacuate the refugees?

SIMONE: No, they'll drive them. Maurice, Robert, will you drive?

MAURICE *ironically*: If Monsieur le Maire orders . . .

PATRON: Certain officials seem to be using this disastrous war as a pretext for laying down the law to the business community. But very well, then, I bow to force. My drivers can take the refugees to Vermillon.

MAYOR: Not to Vermillon; that would mean using Route 74. First to Saint-Nazaire.

PATRON: What can I have my lorries do in Saint-Nazaire? But very well, you're sheltering behind your orders and the army. I'm asking the army to do something for me in return: pack up my wine reserves and the china, because that must go too.

MAYOR: Why can't your men do that?

PATRON: Because my men are on strike. I'd be within my rights if I put them up against the wall for refusing to remove French property to safety in face of the enemy. But there's no discipline left.

MAYOR to the sergeant: Is that something you can put to your men, do you think? I've nothing against giving Monsieur Champon a hand to save his property.

MADAME MACHARD *sees that her daughter wants to say something:*
Quiet, Simone.

SIMONE: But aren't the soldiers supposed to be bringing up the equipment for blowing the bridges?

MAURICE: No. [illegible]

SIMONE: To hold up the tanks till reinforcements come; you know. They ought to go right away.

SERGEANT: We'd have been there by now if we hadn't had to wait for the cookers on account of their not giving us a meal. I don't see why I should fall over myself to help this gentleman and his hotel; he's the one refused to feed us.

SIMONE: You'll get fed, won't he, Monsieur Henri? There'll be no room for provisions on the trucks if you're to be able to carry a proper number of refugees, will there, Maurice? I'll just get the key of the cellar.

MADAME MACHARD: Simone!

PATRON: What's got into you, Simone? I was amazed to see you bring in the Mayor against me. Go indoors at once and wash your neck, you shameless ungrateful creature.

MADAME MACHARD: Please excuse our daughter, Monsieur Champon; she has lost her head.

The *Patron's* mother, here called Madame Mère, then enters and gives Simone the key, telling her to get wine for the soldiers. There is no mention of feeding the refugees or of the danger of looting. and it is the soldiers who then help themselves to the provisions. Simone returns with the bottles and persuades Maurice and Robert to load up. German planes dive, prompting the *Patron* to say that he must get away, as on p. 27, but his mother is also on stage and she replies contemptuously that she is staying:

Thanks to Simone's very sensible arrangements you will get to Saint-Nazaire as planned, and Maurice and Robert will take the china and the refugees south to Lyons. Is that right, Simone?

She proposes to give the town such food stocks as cannot be moved, saying (in a line later given to the Mayor) 'This is a time for sacrifices, Henri. It's a matter of showing good will' (p. 30). Then they all drink (p. 31) and the *Patron* makes his conciliatory

speech (p. 31). The drivers are told to load up with Monsieur Machard, and leave. It is then the *Patron* himself who asks about the petrol in the brickworks, saying:

The Germans mustn't get it. Georges, Gustave, run down to the brickworks. Smash the pump and seal up the tank, right?

MAYOR: Better set fire to it, Henri. There's an army order says all stocks of petrol have got to be burnt. The Germans must not find a single canful in any village.

PATRON: Burn it? Rubbish. We'll need it. How are our forces to replenish their tanks when they attack? Simone, tell the Mayor that France isn't lost yet.

SIMONE: That's a fact, Monsieur le Maire.

MAYOR: But so many people are in the know, Simone.

PATRON: No Frenchman could give away the secret. If I didn't realize that before I do now. Georges, Gustave, get moving.

SIMONE to *Gustave*: I cleaned the garage out for you, Père Gustave.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Right. Patriotism seems to have become all the fashion around here.

Then the *Patron* says good bye to his mother (p. 32), and kisses her and Simone. The radio is heard saying that the French will counter-attack and not a foot of ground is to be given up. There is no more reference to the petrol, and Madame says that she is closing the hotel. Simone is not specifically dismissed, but the last exchange between her and the Mayor is as in the final text, and she picks up the *Patron's* suitcases and slowly leaves with lowered head.

The Berlau script is approximately the same as the final version as far as the appearance of the representatives of the refugees (p. 26). Then, from the Mayor's 'What is it?':

ONE OF THE REFUGEES *excitedly*: Monsieur le Maire, we've heard the hotel is selling off its lorries. We insist you do something about it.

WOMAN: There are sick people in the village hall. We can't take our children to Bordeaux on foot.

The Mayor replies 'Madame, Messieurs' etc. as in the final text, and is answered by the Woman. Then this script cuts straight to the long stage direction on p. 27, with the difference that the main

crowd of refugees does not appear. In the simultaneous dialogue which follows, the left-hand column is that of the final version. In the right-hand column however when Simone asks Robert and Maurice to take the refugees, Maurice refuses, saying 'I'm not a nurse' and telling Robert 'You've got no influence at the *mairie*. The Mayor and the *Patron* are birds of a feather; it's always us who pay the bill in the end . . .' The argument is interrupted by the announcement that the German tanks are nearly at Tours, causing the *Patron* to complain 'And my Sèvres and my vintage wines haven't yet been loaded'. An approximate version of the dialogue from 'SIMONE *angrily*' to 'VOICES *from outside*', then follows (in the final version it comes earlier, on p. 27), with the difference that Simone's anger is initially against Maurice for wanting to clear out and abandon the refugees. Here Madame enters and gives Simone the key (p. 29), and the ensuing dialogue down to her 'Is anybody going to load it for us?' (below) is more or less that of the final text. Thereafter:

SIMONE: Of course, Madame. Right, Maurice?

MAURICE: Go to hell. Pack china, with the Germans arriving?
High time we were off.

MADAME MÈRE *sharply*: Nobody but the children seems to realize that French property cannot be allowed to fall into the hands of the Germans.

MAURICE *to Robert*: All right, we can help carry out the cases.
Exit with Robert to the store room.

It continues approximately as in the final text from 'ONE OF THE REFUGEES' (p. 30) to the general dispersal (p. 31, bottom). Here Maurice, Robert and Georges also leave; Maurice poses the question about the brickworks as he goes, after which the dialogue is a blend of the first and final versions until the *Patron* takes his leave. Asked yet again about the petrol (this time by the Mayor) he says to ask his mother. In the Feuchtwanger script Simone then suggests getting Georges and Père Gustave and blowing it up, but in the Berlau script this is changed to a mere inquiry what should be done.

MADAME MÈRE: Didn't you hear what the *Patron* said? He asked us not to do anything precipitate. We can leave the problem of whether to destroy the petrol till the last minute. After all, it's still my son's property we're dealing with.

SIMONE: But it would be terrible if the Germans used our petrol to fill up, like they did in Abbeville. Wouldn't it, Monsieur le Maire?

MAYOR: It hasn't come to that yet by a long chalk.
The rest of the scene is virtually as in the final text.

Second Dream of Simone Machard (4)

The first version and the Berlau script both have Père Gustave in lieu of the soldier Georges as a member of Simone's bodyguard; neither establishes the identification of the *Patron's* mother as Queen Isabeau. When Simone calls on the angel (p. 36) both versions have her sitting on the ground and beating her drum, crying 'Come here, you Frenchmen, the enemy has arrived'. In the Berlau script there is no reaction; she calls Georges and drums harder, then calls on the Angel. The first version makes the Angel St Michael. Also it has no mention of the Mayor's dream language (p. 34). The Angel's song 'After the Conqueror' (p. 36) is slightly different in the first version, which omits the previous recitative ('Maid, hear me' etc.) and the dialogue with Simone after that.

3. *The Fire*

In the first version subscene (a) bears this title and is scene 5, while subscene (b) is scene 6, The Betrayal, and is followed by the Daydream of Simone Machard. In the Berlau and Feuchtwanger scripts the Daydream is incorporated in the second of these two scenes (instead of, as now, in the first).

(a) (5. The Fire)

At the beginning of the scene the exchange where Georges suspects that Simone has been fired, the mention by Père Gustave of the 'mob from the hall' (p. 38) and Simone's wondering if seeing a person in a dream means that he is dead (p. 39) are none of them in the first version, while the actual entry of the refugees (p. 39) occurs only in the final script. Thereafter there are extensive differences. In the first script the Captain enters at this point, saying that the Mayor will come. 'And another thing. I've been told there were cases of looting and blackmail in these parts yesterday. Order and discipline are herewith re-established: you get me, my friends?' He is followed instantly by Père Gustave. The Captain thereupon delivers a version of the speech which now comes just before the Daydream:

CAPTAIN: Ah, Monsieur le Maire, I trust your wife is in good health. I just wanted to tell you, Duclos, that France's one hope of avoiding total disaster is to collaborate as honourably as she can with the gentlemen of the German General Staff. Paris is overrun with Communists, and here too all kinds of things occurred yesterday without the authorities lifting a finger. To put it in a nutshell, the Commandant is fully aware of this hotel's connection with a certain brickworks. You might like to take action accordingly, Duclos. Wait a moment before you follow me out, or it'll look as if I had to have you dragged down here. *Goes in.*

This is much the same in the Berlau script. Then Simone and the Mayor conduct their dialogue about the brickworks, from his (present) entry (p. 41) to his exit, which in the final version becomes '*He is about to go in*' (p. 42), allowing the Captain to re-enter with his speech roughly as above. All the present dialogue from Madame Soupeau's entry (p. 39) to the entry of the Mayor is an addition to the final script.

In the earlier versions the dialogue with Georges and Père Gustave which now follows the Daydream runs straight on from the Mayor's exit, with slight differences. Thereafter from the entry of the German soldier to the end of (a) everything else is the same except that the German captain (or commandant in the first version) says nothing. The Berlau script however inserts the following dialogue before 'So neither of you . . .' (p. 44):

SOLDIER [i.e. GEORGES]: What are you after? Oh, the petrol, is it? Don't you touch it. You keep out.

SIMONE: But the *Patron* said it was up to us.

SOLDIER: The *Patron's* gone, but you're here. They'll shoot you down like a mad dog. *He draws her downstage. Urgently:* Simone, promise me you'll be sensible.

SIMONE: But you said yourself that they're bringing up whole new regiments. They broke through against the 132nd, you said.

SOLDIER: But not against the 7th [her brother's unit, in this version].

SIMONE *quietly*: That's not true, Monsieur Georges.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: Don't you get mixed up with the Germans. Sabotage can cost you your neck.

SOLDIER: It all comes from that damned book of yours. You've

been reading it all day again, then you go and imagine you're God knows who, isn't that it?

Apart from the first sentence this is not in the Feuchtwanger script. But from then on to the end of (a) both are practically identical with the final text.

(b) (6. The Betrayal)

The first version specifies that this occurs three days after (a). In all three of the early scripts the scene starts with Georges reading the paper as the German captain saunters across the stage and into the hotel. Simone brings a hot-water bottle for the *Patron's* mother, who is unwell. Then Simone wonders about the significance of seeing a person in a dream (the passage now near the beginning of (a)) and her parents enter, delighted that M. Machard has got the council job. It appears that the *Patron* has returned; the Berlau and Feuchtwanger scripts add that he and Maurice were held up by German tanks. In all three versions he comes in with Robert, looking pale and sleepless. All this is prior to the beginning of the present subscene (b), but from then on the dialogue continues much as in the final text up to where Simone says that she will confess to the Germans to save the *Patron* (p. 47). The main differences are (1) that the Machard parents are present up to the firing of Georges; (2) that there is no mention of the refugees in the village hall; (3) that in lieu of Père Gustave's remark about the hotel's sudden popularity (p. 47) Robert tells Simone that the Peugeot has been stolen, that one of the lorries has broken down and that Maurice is bringing back the other. Thereafter however the scene ends differently.

In the first version it ends quickly, with the *Patron* assuring Simone that since she no doubt meant well he will stand by her, then going into the hotel without saying whether she is really fired or not. Robert asks if he will betray her, and Georges says 'He can't do that. After all he is a Frenchman'. The Mayor and the Captain walk across the stage into the hotel; Simone bows to the Mayor, who pays no attention. That is the end of the scene, and the Daydream follows.

Daydream of Simone Machard

In the first version there is no game of cards. The *Patron* is present, and the Captain enters later, bringing the German captain as an

'unknown knight' with whom the French are invited to collaborate. He offers the Mayor a cigar, but the drumming starts again and the Mayor refuses. There are no references to 'the mob'; Madame boxes the *Patron's* ears, not the Mayor's, and the dream ends with the German captain saying 'Of course the Maid must be got rid of'.

In the Berlau and Feuchtwanger scripts, after Simone has said that she will confess to the Germans (as above) Madame Machard reappears to say that the Mayor has given the council job to 'old Frossart' instead of to her husband, who has been 'dropped like a hot potato'. 'The Mayor', comments Georges, 'is scared of his own courage'. This leads straight into the Daydream. Mayor, captain and *Patron* sit playing cards, and neither Madame nor the German Captain appears. After 'if I am to sell my wine' (p. 43) the *Patron* says 'Have you really decided to support her, King Charles the Seventh? And given her father the council job?' The Mayor announces his determination much as in the final version, then sits down. The dream ends with the Captain pointing this out to the *Patron* and saying 'There you are, Henri; France doesn't support her any more'.

A quite different concluding section follows in both these scripts. After the dream Simone says she must leave, then Maurice arrives, having heard about the explosion:

MAURICE: Are you crazy, Simone? How could you?

SIMONE: He won't give me away.

MAURICE: Put your things on at once, you must get out of here. I'll drive you. Pack up whatever she needs most, Madame Machard.

MADAME MACHARD: I don't understand you people. You aren't expecting her to throw up her job?

GEORGES *to Maurice*: You really think he might . . . ?

MAURICE *shrugs his shoulders*: If he cares about saving his wretched hotel he'll have to. They might have used the petrol as a way of showing how ready they are to collaborate. She's put a spoke in that. There's only one thing left for them to do: turn her in. *With emphasis*: At this moment she's got no more vindictive enemies in the world than Madame Mère and her respected son.

ROBERT: You're exaggerating. After all, they are French.

MAURICE: Didn't you get what they were saying on the radio?

GEORGES: Wasn't listening. What was it?

MAURICE: The Marshal has dissolved the government and taken over all its powers. That means open collaboration. Meantime *she's* still at war.

ROBERT: The *Patron* said he'd stand by her.

MAURICE: He hadn't been told about the radio announcement. Get your things on, Simone.

SIMONE *still absent-mindedly*: I can't leave, Maurice.

GEORGES: Ten minutes back you were saying you must.

SIMONE: That was only because I was imagining things. But the *Patron* won't give me away.

MADAME MACHARD: But, Messieurs, don't give the girl crazy ideas. She can't possibly give up her job now, when the rent's due. What with our André being away as well.

PATRON *comes out of the hotel, very excited*: Simone! You've got to disappear! At once! Maurice, get her out of here! Doesn't matter where. Got that?

MAURICE: Yes sir.

PATRON: It's a matter of minutes. *Goes back into the hotel.*

ROBERT: So he *isn't* going to give you away.

MAURICE: He's given her away already. Did you see how he'd been sweating? Get a move on, Simone!

SIMONE: No, no, no. I don't want to leave. He's not going to touch me. He only came out to help me.

MAURICE: He's got a bad conscience, that's all.

Simone obstinately stays put.

GEORGES: What have you got against leaving?

SIMONE: I can't. Suppose my brother comes back. I promised him I'd be here and keep his job for him.

MAURICE: That's enough. *He seizes her, picks her up over his shoulder and carries her struggling into the garage. Go outside the hotel, Georges, and whistle if the coast is clear. Exit with Simone.*

Georges goes out into the road. During what follows he is heard whistling.

MADAME MACHARD: I knew it would come to this. Her brother's to blame, and all that book-reading.

SIMONE'S VOICE *from outside*: I'm not going. I can't. You don't understand.

MADAME MACHARD: What have I done to deserve it?

ROBERT: Oh, do shut up. Don't you realize that she'll be shot if they catch her?

MADAME MACHARD: Simone? Holy mother of God! *Sits distraught at the foot of the petrol pump.*

Exit Robert into the garage.

Enter from the hotel the Patron and the Captain.

PATRON: Simone! Père Gustave! *To the Captain:* Actually she was discharged some days ago. But went on hanging around my yard, so I've been told.

CAPTAIN *notices Madame Machard:* Isn't that her mother?

PATRON *embarrassed:* Ah, Madame Machard. Have you by any chance seen Simone?

MADAME MACHARD: No, Monsieur Henri, I'm looking for her myself. That girl's always doing errands for the hotel, Monsieur le Capitaine.

Père Gustave enters from the store room.

PATRON: Oh, there you are, Père Gustave. Go and get Simone, would you?

Père Gustave goes obediently up the road. The whistling stops.

PATRON *to the Captain:* I just can't imagine what put the idea in her head.

CAPTAIN: It's not as hard as all that, Monsieur Soupault. But it'll all be sorted out.

PÈRE GUSTAVE *coming back, as Georges's whistling is heard once more:* I can't find her, Monsieur Henri. Georges says she left half an hour ago.

CAPTAIN *sceptically:* Too bad that you people 'can't find her', Monsieur Soupault. *Turns and goes into the hotel.*

PATRON *mopping his perspiration:* Thank God for that.

MADAME MACHARD: In the nick of time. The things we have to go through for our children!

Maurice appears at the garage door.

PATRON: Why are you still here, Maurice? Shouldn't you be . . .

MAURICE: Did she come out this way? She broke away from me.

Simone comes in from the street, with Georges behind her.

PATRON: Are you out of your mind? Quick, quick . . .

SIMONE: You aren't going to give me away, are you, Monsieur Henri?

PATRON: I told you to disappear. And now—*Furious gesture of helplessness.* First you set fire to my brickworks. I don't say a word, though it's *I* who have to take the can with the Germans. And now you're being pigheaded just so as to make

things harder for me. They can shoot you for all I care; I wash my hands of it.

The German captain comes out of the hotel in helmet and greatcoat, with the Captain behind him.

CAPTAIN: But we'll do everything we can, sir. Give us two hours.

Simone has instinctively tried to hide behind the Patron. He steps to one side so that she is seen.

CAPTAIN: Why, here she is. Here's our arsonist, sir.

THE GERMAN CAPTAIN: A child like that?

Pause.

PATRON: Simone, this is a pretty kettle of fish.

All this is omitted from the final version, where the dialogue about the German poster ('It all depends whether she' p. 48 to Père Gustave's 'I told you nothing of the sort' below) has been brought forward from the beginning of scene 8 in the earlier versions, and the rest is new.

4. *The Trial*

(a) *Fourth Dream of Simone Machard* (7)

In the first version this takes place 'during the night of 18-19 June' (i.e. three days earlier than in the final text). All three earlier scripts specify that the confused music is to 'continue the motifs of the Third Dream'. In the first version there is only one soldier with the German captain.

Down to the entry of the judges all three are more or less the same as the final text, and the first version continues so as far as the point where they put their heads together (p. 52). In the Berlau and Feuchtwanger scripts however there are at first only three judges, the Mayor suddenly appearing beside them 'in the capacity of a defence counsel'; nor does Simone identify them one by one as they come in but all at once when they uncover their faces. Otherwise these two scripts continue close to the final version down to the end of the scene, the main later additions being the reference to the refugees in the village hall and Madame Soupeau's concluding line. In the first version a number of the lines were differently allotted, though their wording remains the same: thus Père Gustave's call for accusers from the public (p. 52) and his challenge to the Angel (p. 55) were given to Simone's father, while it was the Mayor who called for a chair for Queen Isabeau and asked Simone 'Where does God dwell? . . .' (p. 54).

(b) (8. The Trial)

The first version gives two alternative scenes, one of them incomplete and each differing widely from the other. The Berlau script also gives two texts, the first of which peters out in a series of shorthand notes, while the second is identical with that of the Feuchtwanger script. Altogether, therefore, there are four main variants of this scene: the first version (i) and (ii), the Feuchtwanger version (which seems to have been worked out from Berlau (i) and possibly copied in Berlau (ii)), and the final 1946 text.

In the first version (i) there is no flag visible, and the Mayor, *Patron*, his mother and the Captain are on stage at the start, as well as the four of the final version. A German soldier marches Simone in, hands the Mayor a document, salutes and leaves. The document gives the responsibility of dealing with Simone to the local authorities.

CAPTAIN: The tone of the document is severe, but the contents are very decent. The Commandant is leaving it to the local authority to interrogate the incendiarist. Monsieur le Maire, do your duty by the commune of Saint-Martin.

MAYOR *sighing*: Simone, the Germans have handed you back to your own authorities. You are strongly suspected of sabotage, a crime for which one can be shot. However the authorities have been able to raise some doubt as to the deliberateness of your intention to commit sabotage. Do you understand the purpose of this inquiry?

SIMONE: Yes, Monsieur le Maire.

MAYOR: Luckily the question is easily settled. Now listen carefully. If you caused the fire *before* the Germans put up their poster forbidding the destruction of essential stocks then it was not sabotage. Suppose you had done it after the poster, it would have been sabotage and we wouldn't save you. Do you understand that? Did you see the poster?

The dialogue follows as on p. 48 (which is where it was shifted to in the final text), except that there it is the *Patron*, not the Mayor who asks the questions. After Père Gustave's 'I told you nothing of the sort' (p. 48) it goes on:

MAYOR: Père Gustave, you have offered to give evidence to the effect that Simone set fire to the brickworks. But you insist that she did it before the German order?

PÈRE GUSTAVE *avoiding Simone's eye*: Yes.

ROBERT: Oh, you've volunteered to give evidence, have you?

MADAME MÈRE: Quiet, Robert.

MAYOR: It's all perfectly clear. *To Simone*: Will you show us where the red poster was displayed? Come along, it'll still be there.

SIMONE: But I saw it before that, Monsieur le Maire.

MAYOR: Don't be difficult. This is official.

Mayor, Patron and Captain leave with Simone through the gateway.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: I had to, because of what I let out when the *Patron* drove off.

MAURICE: Shut up.

GEORGES: 'The Mayor's a decent man. He's whitewashing her to the Germans, and they'll let her off.

MAURICE: 'They're a lot of crooks. All they're doing is white-wash Saint-Martin against any suspicion that there might be Frenchmen here [cf. p. 61 in our text]. They're set on collaborating with the Germans. Simone's right. It's as though she knew what tune they were going to play.

ROBERT: We won't have heard the last of it. You wait.

Then the party returns with Simone, and the Mayor says he thinks the Germans will agree that it was not sabotage. The Captain differs, and the *Patron's* mother says 'It was a base act of revenge against my son and myself'.

MAYOR: Revenge? What for?

MADAME MÈRE: Because we dismissed her. It's quite simple.

MAYOR: Henri, do you believe that?

PATRON *forcefully*: I refuse to stand up for this creature any longer. I offered her a chance to get away; she insisted on staying. I'm through with her. I've had enough to worry about.

Then Madame sends Maurice, Robert, Père Gustave and Georges back to their work, and they leave. She starts cross-examining Simone, approximately as from where she speaks *To Simone* (p. 58) to Simone's 'I did it because of the enemy' (p. 60). Then she tells Thérèse to 'fetch the sister' and delivers a speech that is partly the Captain's 'The least our guests can expect . . .' (p. 60) and partly her own 'The child is insubordinate' etc. (p. 62) of the final text. Thérèse returns with an Ursuline nun.

MADAME MÈRE: Sister Michèle is being so good as to take this unfortunate child into the educational establishment run by the strict sisters of St Ursula.

SIMONE *trembling*: No, no! Not to St Ursula's! I did it because of the Germans. I want to stay.

The sister takes her arm and leads her to the gateway.

SIMONE: André! André!

There it breaks off at the foot of a page.

The first version (ii), headed in Brecht's hand 'Second version, January 43', likewise breaks off at the foot of a page, this time towards the end of Madame's interrogation of Simone. It starts with Maurice, Robert, Georges and Père Gustave on stage, as in the final version, but with two German sentries. They are discussing Simone's examination by the Mayor, which has taken place offstage and in the German captain's presence, but evidently went much as in (i). Georges says 'I don't see why he doesn't do the interrogating himself, Maurice'.

MAURICE: Well, you saw how angry it made him yesterday when he heard it was a child. Shooting children doesn't go all that well with their policy of dishing out soup on the square in front of the *mairie*. The Captain had supper with him last night. I can tell you exactly how the conversation will have gone. *He mimics the German captain and the French captain in turn*. 'Bad show. I'll have to shoot her'.—'That'll put the kybosh on peaceful collaboration for the next couple of years, sir.'—'What's the answer?' 'Collaboration, my dear captain. Leave the case to us.'—'Then tomorrow pop goes the water tower, eh, Monsieur? Here's our radio announcing every hour that the French population is receiving us with open arms, wants nothing but peace.'—'My dear captain, but whoever says the person responsible was acting against the Germans?'—'Aha . . . I see. You mean you can prove that she did it *before* . . .' So that now she did it *before* the proclamation, d'you see?

Then the *Patron* enters and tells Père Gustave that his evidence won't be needed: 'A child: what do you expect?' etc. (p. 56). Georges's ensuing remarks finish with him saying that someone betrayed her.

PATRON: You dare to say that to me after I've stood here and told her she must get away?

He seizes the wounded Georges by the arm, and there is a struggle in which Robert joins till it is interrupted by the entry of the German captain. The captain tells the two sentries to follow him and leaves.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: He's taking his men away. Does that mean that Simone's been let free?

MAURICE: I'd be extremely surprised.

GEORGES: Anyhow that boche with the monocle realizes that Captain Bellaire isn't the only person around here. Monsieur le Capitaine has had his innings. They couldn't conceal the fact that there are still some Frenchmen in France. Ow! Even kids of thirteen can show them, eh, Maurice?

But the Mayor's two policemen appear at the gate, then Madame leads in Simone from the hotel, with the Mayor and the Captain following, and they all go into the store room. Maurice makes his remark about whitewashing Saint-Martin, and the *Patron* angrily orders the policemen to clear the yard.

MAURICE: Let's go. There's nothing we can do here for the moment. They've got their police and they've got the Germans. *Draws Robert and Georges away.* Poor Simone. Too many enemies.

GEORGES *hoarsely*: Look out, Monsieur Henri, other times are coming. And when they come we'll be asking you about Simone. *Exeunt all three.*

The party then emerges from the store room, and Madame conducts her interrogation of Simone on lines rather closer to the final text, including a mention of 'the mob from the village hall'. This version breaks off with Madame's 'How did you know the Germans would discover . . .' (p. 59).

Finally the Feuchtwanger script (identical with Berlau (ii)) starts with much the same stage direction as our text, but without Georges and with the addition of the two German sentries. It opens with Maurice's remark about the Marshal; Simone however has not got away but is being interrogated as in the first version (ii). Georges, who has been giving evidence, comes out of the hotel to report that they are all behaving very decently, even Madame and the Captain. The German captain has said 'that these are tragic days and he has no desire to hurt Frenchmen's feelings'. He is allowing the others to establish Simone's ignorance of the poster because, as Maurice puts it, 'I don't imagine they want to

start off their armistice and their formal collaboration by shooting our children'.

GEORGES *scratching his head*: Do you think nothing's going to happen to her?

MAURICE: That's another question.

ROBERT: If they do anything to Simone I'm coming to Algiers with you, Maurice. *To Georges*: The radio says the old government's going to carry on the fight from there.

GEORGES *moving his arm thoughtfully*: That's what one ought to do.

PÈRE GUSTAVE: They talk a lot on the radio.

Then the *Patron* enters as in the first version (ii), leading on to the struggle and a version of the ensuing dialogue as far as Madame Soupeau's entry with Simone (but no policemen) and disappearance into the store room.

PATRON *complainingly, as he dusts down his suit*: I gave her an opportunity to disappear. She insisted on staying. She's caused me nothing but trouble from the very first. A hundred thousand francs, she's cost me. As for the cost to my nerves, I can't count it. And now she's causing bad blood between me and my old employees. That's what comes of trying to protect her. Well, the time for sentimentality is over. I shan't interfere any more. Not that I bear you people a grudge. She upset all of us. Back to work, Maurice and Robert!

Maurice and Robert stay put.

PATRON: Didn't you hear me?

MAURICE: Robert and I will just wait and see what's happening to Simone.

The party leaves the store room, and this time Madame's interrogation of Simone is witnessed and occasionally interrupted by Robert, Maurice and Georges. It is longer than in the final version, though largely coinciding with it, and ends with an admission by Simone that she was acting on her own, not on the Mayor's orders.

MADAME SOUPEAU: To settle a score with the hotel.

PATRON: And to think Maman told lies to the Germans to make them set you free!

The two policemen enter, and thereafter the script stays close to the final text, except that there are no nuns and the institution is

the 'House of Correction at 'Tours'; (an addition to the Berlau (ii) script in Brecht's hand introduced the 'brutal looking lady' and the comments indicating that this was a place for the mentally handicapped). However, instead of fetching her things from the store room, as in the final text, she says good-bye to Georges, Maurice and Robert until she is dragged off calling 'André! André!' There is no appearance of the Angel, and after the Patron's order to resume work the ending is different.

MAURICE: What, us? You'll find it difficult to get anyone in Saint-Martin to work for you after this. Come on.

Maurice, Robert and Georges turn to leave.

PATRON *running after them*: But Maurice! I haven't done anything to you, have I?—Five years we've been together—It was for the hotel's sake—It was for the sake of your jobs, for that matter—Maurice! Robert!

GEORGES *at the gateway, turns round, hoarsely*: You look out. Other times are coming. When they come we'll be asking you about Simone. *Curtain.*

In the 1946 script, which our text follows, the date is given as 'Morning of June 19th'. The Mayor's order to M. Machard to clear the village hall is a typed addition. The nuns are mainly handwritten amendments (as in Berlau (ii)); the 'brutal-looking lady' remains in one stage direction (the published text makes her plural) but elsewhere is amended to 'the nuns' or 'one of the nuns'. The House of Correction is struck out, together with all references but one to Tours (the Mayor offers to give evidence there). References to St Ursula come from the first version, those to the mentally handicapped from the additions to the Berlau script, reinforced by Simone's new comment 'They chain them up!' (p. 62).

3. FEUCHTWANGER'S NOVEL

Simone, a novel by Lion Feuchtwanger, was published in 1944 by the Viking Press in a translation by G. A. Herrmann. It is less 'the book of the play' than an independent reworking of the ideas discussed in the course of the author's collaboration with Brecht, and it differs in various important respects. Thus out of twenty-one chapters only two contain Visions (as against the much more even alternation in the play) though there are three others where Simone is shown reading the books (plural) which she has been given by an old bookbinder friend. The town where the story is

set is a fair-sized place, a Burgundian *chef-lieu d'arrondissement* (i.e. of the importance, say, of Châlons-sur-Saône) where the step-uncle who corresponds to the *Patron* runs a largish transport business, not a hotel. The refugees are in the Palais de Justice; the sous-préfet corresponds to the Mayor, and the local Marquis de Saint-Brisson to the Captain who wants his wines evacuated. Simone Planchard is 'a tall, lanky fifteen-year-old':

Her bony, tanned face framed with dark blond [*sic*] hair was tense; her dark, deep-set eyes under a low but broad and well-shaped forehead eagerly absorbed all that moved before her. . . . She could scarcely be called beautiful, but her intelligent, thoughtful, somewhat stubborn face with its strong chin and prominent Burgundian nose was good to look at.

Moreover her father had been a local left-wing hero who had died in the Congo two years previously while investigating native working conditions. Madame, who corresponds to the *Patron's* mother (and like her appears as Queen Isabeau) was evidently the father's step-mother. Thanks to her, Simone's role in the household (the Villa Monrepos) is that of an unpaid servant.

This Simone has no brother. She has a confidant in the secretary of the sous-préfecture and two friends of her own age—her schoolmate Henriette and Henriette's brother Étienne—though neither figures very largely in the story. Of her uncle's employees in the loading yard Maurice (there is no Robert, and Georges is a nonentity) is at first cruelly and gratuitously offensive to her; it looks as if he is meant to stand for the French Communists, sceptical of the bourgeoisie and their war, and uninvolved until after the German victory. In the dream episodes he figures as the monstrous Gilles de Rais. From the first Simone seems attracted to him, and once she has set fire to the yard (lorries, petrol and all)—which occurs about half-way through the book, as against two-thirds of the way through the play—he starts behaving more amicably, though still in a rather condescending way. He offers to get her away on his motor-cycle; but by the time she decides to accept his offer it is too late and he has already gone. She escapes by herself, but is arrested in Nevers and brought back.

Though Madame and the other villains (such as the lawyer Maître Levautour) seem heavily caricatured, the step-uncle's actions are generally credible and within the bounds of reason. For much of the story he even behaves kindly. 'Don't you understand', he asks her, 'that I can't live without my business? I am

a business man. I can't help that'. And again, in explanation of his actions, 'Some people are born to be artists, others to be engineers; I was born to be a business man, a promoter.' To save his business and at the same time prevent the Germans from punishing the entire town he arranges with the French authorities that Simone shall confess to having caused the fire for personal reasons. This she formally does on the understanding that no proceedings will be taken against her. However, the Marquis and Madame see to it that she is sent away to the Grey House, the reformatory at 'Francheville', the departmental capital, and 'an uncouth woman' escorts her away. As she is driven off the crowd in the street makes signs to her—

Arms were raised waving to her, women and girls wept, the gendarme had come to attention, shouts sounded in her direction: 'Good-bye, Simone—good-bye, Simone Planchard—take care of yourself, Simone—so long, Simone—we won't forget you, Simone Planchard—we'll come and get you, Simone.'

And she rides away confident 'that she would survive the Grey House'.

SCHWEYK IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Texts by Brecht

THE STORY

The Good Soldier Schweyk, after surviving the First World War, is still alive. Our story shows his successful efforts to survive the Second as well. The new rulers have even more grandiose and all-embracing plans than the old, which makes it even harder for today's Little Man to remain more or less alive.

The play begins with a

Prologue in the Higher Regions

wherein a preternaturally large Hitler with a preternaturally large voice talks to his preternaturally large police chief Himmler about the putative loyalty, reliability, self-denial, enthusiasm, geopolitical consciousness and so on and so forth of the European 'Little Man'. The reason why he is demanding such virtues of the Little Man is that he has made up his mind to conquer the world. His police chief assures him that the European Little Man bears him the same love as he does the Little Man in Germany. The Gestapo will see to that. The Fuhrer has nothing to fear, and need have no hesitation about conquering the world.

I

There has been an attempt on Hitler's life. Hearty applause from the 'Chalice' in Prague, where the good dog-dealer

Josef Schweyk and his friend Baloun are sitting over their morning drinks and discussing politics with the Chalice's landlady, the young widow Anna Kopecka. Fat Baloun, whose exceptional appetite presents him with special problems in these days of Nazi rationing, quickly lapses into his normal gloom. He has learnt from reliable sources that the German field kitchens will dish out sizeable helpings of meat. How much longer is he going to be able to hold out against the temptation simply to go and join up in the German army? Mrs Kopecka and Schweyk are greatly disturbed by his situation. A soul in torment! Schweyk, ever the realist, suggests making Baloun swear an oath never under any circumstances to have anything to do with the Germans. Baloun reminds them that it is six months since he last had a square meal. In exchange for a square meal, he says, he would be prepared to do *anything*. Mrs Kopecka thinks something might be arranged. She is a blazing patriot, and the idea of Baloun in the German army is more than she can bear. When her young admirer turns up, the butcher's son Prochazka, they hold a touching conversation in which she poses Cleopatra's age-old question: 'If it truly is love, then tell me how much?' She wants to know if, for instance, his love would run to the scrounging of two pounds of pickled pork for the undernourished Baloun. He could take it from the paternal shop, only the Nazis have established heavy penalties for black-marketeering. None the less, seeing the way to the widow's heart open before him for the first time, young Prochazka agrees in a positive tornado of emotion to bring round the meat. Meanwhile the Chalice has been filling up and Schweyk has started letting all and sundry know what he thinks of the Munich plot against Hitler. Inspired by the announcements on the German radio, he plunges with foolhardy innocence into a mortally dangerous conversation with Brettschneider, who is known to all the regular customers as a Gestapo agent. His classic drivelling fails to deceive the Gestapo man. Without any more ado Herr Brettschneider arrests the amazed but obliging Schweyk.

2

Introduced to Gestapo headquarters in Petschek's Bank by Herr Brettschneider, Schweyk flings up his right hand, bawls out 'Long live our Führer Adolf Hitler! We are going to win this war!', and is discharged as chronically half-witted.

Hearing that Schweyk is a dog dealer, the interrogating SS officer Ludwig Bullinger asks about a pedigree dog he has seen in the Salmgasse. 'Beg to report, sir, I know that animal professionally', says Schweyk cheerfully, and goes on to expatiate on the racial question. That pomeranian is the apple of Privy Councillor Vojta's eye, and not to be had for love or money. Schweyk and the SS officer discuss how best to have the Privy Councillor arrested and expropriated as an enemy of the state; however, it turns out that he is 'no yid' but a quisling. So Schweyk gets the honourable job of stealing the pedigree pom and showing himself to be a good collaborationist.

3

Returning in triumph to the Chalice, Schweyk finds that a tense situation has developed. Fat Baloun is waiting for his meal like a cat on hot bricks, fully prepared at the first glimpse of the meat to abjure all intention of ever joining Hitler's army. It is now ten past twelve, and young Prochazka has not yet shown up. Schweyk has been considerate enough to bring along SS-Man Müller II from Gestapo HQ, with the promise that widow Kopecka will tell his future by reading his hand. At first the landlady refuses on the grounds that she has had unfortunate experiences with her predictions. Young Prochazka now finally appears, and everyone looks nervously at his music case—he is a student at the music academy—because of course the SS-Man must not see the meat. To get him out of the way Mrs Kopecka sits down and reads his hand. It seems that he is destined to perform heroic

deeds, and has been picked out finally for a hero's death. Depressed and demoralized, the SS-Man lurches out and Baloun flings himself on the music case round which he has been longingly circling for some time. The case is empty. Young Prochazka makes his miserable confession: he didn't dare steal the meat because the sight of Schweyk's arrest gave him such a fear of the Gestapo. Angrily the widow Kopecka spurns him with a biblical gesture, for he has failed the test as a man and as a Czech. Despondently he leaves, but no sooner does the bitterly frustrated fat man speak slightly of her suitor than she snaps back that the Nazis are to blame for it all. So Baloun's wrath is diverted to the oppressors of his once beautiful country, and when Herr Brettschneider the Gestapo agent comes in he starts singing the subversive song of the black radish, which must 'get out', and be 'sliced and salted' till 'he sweats', all of which strikes Herr Brettschneider as suspicious but without offering him any pretext to intervene.

First Schweyk Finale

Interlude in the Upper Regions

The mighty Hitler, having encountered obstacles in his attempt to conquer the world, needs more planes, tanks and guns, and inquires of the mighty Goering whether the European Little Man is prepared to work for him. Goering assures him that the European Little Man will work for him just like the Little Man in Germany. The Gestapo will see to that. The Führer has nothing to fear and need have no hesitation about carrying on conquering the world.

Schweyk's operation against the germanophil Privy Councilor Vojta's pom takes place in the gardens along the Vltava or Moldau, which is where Vojta's maidservant and her friend

Paula are accustomed to take the pedigree hound for his walkies every evening. Schweyk and Baloun come up to the bench where the two girls are sitting, and pretend to have erotic aims in view. Schweyk warns the girls in all honesty that SS-leader Bullinger wants to annex the pom for the sake of its racial purity and have it sent to his lady wife in Cologne; he has had this on impeccable authority. Thereupon he goes off 'to meet someone at the Metropole'. Baloun exchanges pleasantries with the girls, and they are moved by the Moldau's majestic flow to start singing a folk song. By the end of the song the dog has gone. Schweyk has underhandedly lured it away as they were singing. The girls rush off to the police station, and Schweyk has just returned with the pom to tell his friend that they mustn't let the SS-leader have it till he has put down the money, when a fishy-looking individual appears on the scene. Schweyk the dog-catcher has a man-catcher on his track; the individual identifies himself as a functionary of the Nazi Labour Organization whose job it is to recruit idlers and loafers into the 'voluntary labour service'. Concerned for the pom, Schweyk and Baloun are led off for registration.

5

Dinner break in the Prague goods sidings. Schweyk and Baloun have become shunters for Hitler and are waiting under the eyes of a heavily-armed German soldier for their cabbage soup to be sent up from the Chalice. Today it is widow Kopecka in person who brings their enamel dishes. The stolen pom left in her care by Schweyk is becoming the focus of some intense political activity, and must be got off the premises. The controlled press is saying that the dog's disappearance is due to an act of vengeance by the population against a pro-German official. Schweyk promises to come and collect it. He is only half concentrating, since he is troubled by the state of Baloun. The sentry's dinner has arrived—

goulash! Trembling from head to foot, Baloun has gone sniffing after the pot as it was borne past him. Now he is excitedly asking the sentry whether the helpings in the German army are always as big as that, etc., etc., and scarcely pays attention to the imploring glances of his friends. The soldier is plunged in thought as he munches his goulash, all the while silently moving his lips between gobbets. He has been told to memorize the number 4268, being that of a waggon with agricultural machinery for Lower Bavaria, and this is something he finds difficult. Always ready to help, Schweyk sets out to teach him a mnemonic technique which he learned from a water-board statistician who was one of the regulars at the Chalice. By the time he has finished explaining it the poor sentry's brain is in such a tangle that when they eventually ask him for the number he helplessly points to any old waggon. Schweyk is afraid that this may mean that a waggonload of machine guns for Stalingrad may get sent to Bavaria in lieu. 'But who can tell?', he remarks consolingly to Baloun and Mrs Kopecka. 'By that time perhaps what they'll need most in Stalingrad will be combine-harvesters and it'll be Bavaria's turn to want machine-guns.'

6

Saturday evening at the Chalice. Dance. A morose Baloun takes the floor with the Privy Councillor's maidservant, who is there with her friend. The police are still interviewing the two girls about the pom. Yesterday however they dropped a hint to Herr Brettschneider as to its whereabouts: at SS-leader Bullinger's; possibly by now in Cologne. Baloun hints that this may be his last evening at the Chalice: he is fed up with feeling hungry. And it incidentally emerges that the noisy fun of the dance floor serves a higher purpose: covering up the sound of the news from London, which Kopecka is listening to and passing on to the guests. Enter then Schweyk, cheerfully, with a parcel under his arm: meat for Baloun's

goulash. The fat man can hardly believe it; the two friends embrace most movingly. Baloun's enthusiasm is such however that Schweyk asks Mrs Kopecka to put extra paprika in the goulash, since it's only horsemeat. The landlady looks quizzically at him, and he confesses that it is Mr Vojta's pom. A police car draws up. SS-leader Bullinger enters the Chalice, with SS-men at his heels. Hue and cry for the Vojta pom. Asked by Bullinger whether he knows the dog's whereabouts, Schweyk innocently replies that he hasn't got it. 'Didn't you see in the papers, Herr SS-leader, where it said it had been stolen?' Bullinger's patience gives way. He bellows that the Chalice is the source of all subversive Czechish subversiveness and will have to be smoked out. Moreover the dog can only be there. The SS is starting to search the place when Herr Brettschneider arrives. Herr Brettschneider, who has long pictured himself in the role of protector (this is, after all, a Protectorate) to the charming Mrs Kopecka, forcefully stands up to the fuming Bullinger and invites him to Gestapo HQ, where he has some rather revealing information about the present location of the missing dog. Mrs Kopecka's house is above suspicion; he would go to the stake for that. Unfortunately at this very moment the gentlemen's attention is drawn to a parcel reposing on one of the tables. The wretched Baloun has been unable to keep his fingers off Schweyk's gift. A triumphant Bullinger discloses the contents of the parcel: meat. So the Chalice is a centre of the black market! At that Schweyk feels forced to admit that he put the parcel there. He claims that a gentleman with a black beard gave it to him 'to look after'. All those present affirm having seen the man, while Herr Brettschneider, after going to the stake on the Chalice's behalf, thinks it very possible that the criminal spotted the SS a hundred yards off and accordingly ran away. None the less Bullinger insists on arresting Schweyk, and the gentlemen escort him out of the Chalice—Bullinger, with the parcel under his arm, prophesying that he will find that dog yet. Cold-shouldered by the widow, young Prochazka has spent the entire evening sitting in a corner;

now he slinks guiltily out, followed by the widow's icy stare. Baloun bursts into tears. Thanks to his weakness the loving couple has been parted and his friend landed in mortal danger. The Chalice's landlady consoles him. In a big song she foretells that just as the Moldau washes away all the dirt, so her oppressed people's love of their country will wash away the cruelties of their invaders.

Second Schweyk Finale

Interlude in the Upper Regions

The anxious Hitler, having been caught by the Russian winter, needs more soldiers. He inquires of the anxious Goebbels whether the European Little Man is prepared to fight for him. Goebbels assures him that the European Little Man will fight for him just like the Little Man in Germany. The Gestapo will see to that.

7

As a result of disagreements between Bullinger the crocodile and Brettschneider the tiger, and what with Hitler's screaming for fresh soldiers, the good soldier Schweyk has moved from the cellars of the Gestapo to the German Army recruiting bureau. Among those whom he encounters there is Privy Councillor Vojta, who is being sent to the front because his pom was stolen. All the inmates are discussing what loathsome diseases they can report to the doctors at their medical inspection. Schweyk for his part feels another bout of rheumatism coming, since he has no time to travel to Russia for Hitler when 'nothing's been settled in Prague'. Hearing that young Prochazka is standing outside the barracks with an important message for him, he fears the worst. Happily Prochazka manages to bribe an SS-man to smuggle in a note to him, and it is an encouraging one. The Chalice landlady's suitor writes that, having been deeply moved by Schweyk's

self-sacrifice and ghastly fate, he will now supply 'the desired article'. At that Schweyk feels prepared to devote himself with an untroubled mind to Hitler's Russian affairs, said to be going none too well. Outside is heard the Nazis' notorious Horst Wessel song; a battalion is moving off to the East. The inmates begin singing their own version of the Nazi anthem, where 'The butcher calls' and they 'march like sheep'; and an NCO comes in who is mistaken enough to praise them for joining in so cheerfully, then informs them that they are all undoubtedly fit to enlist and are accordingly accepted into the army. They are to be divided among different units to prevent them from getting up to any filthy tricks, so Schweyk bids a touching farewell to the Privy Councillor and goes off to Hitler's war.

8*

Weeks have elapsed. Deep in the wintry plains of the Russian empire Hitler's good soldier Schweyk is marching to join his unit near Stalingrad, where it is supposed to combine with other sections of the Nazi army in holding back the Red Army's terrible assaults. As a result of one of his numerous misadventures he has lost contact with the rest of his draft. Untroubled by geographical preconceptions, however, and in his usual blithely trusting frame of mind, he is marching towards his allotted destination wrapped in a great bundle of assorted articles of clothing to keep out the cold. A semi-demolished signpost says that Stalingrad is 100 miles off.

While he is thus marching to Stalingrad the Chalice keeps looming up in a rosy light before our good Schweyk's eyes. He pictures to himself how young Prochazka lives up to his promise^s. The man's love of the landlady has overcome his fear of the Gestapo, and to her agreeable surprise he hands Mrs Kopecka two pounds of pickled pork for Schweyk's unfortunate friend Baloun.

* The stage is divided in two.

As he battles courageously against the icy blasts of the steppes the indefatigable and utterly well-intentioned Schweyk becomes uncomfortably aware that he is getting no closer to his goal. The further he marches, the greater the distances shown on the signposts to Stalingrad, where Hitler so urgently needs him. A thousand miles away Anna Kopecka may at this moment be singing her 'Song of the Chalice', that homely and hospitable place. The voracious Baloun's long-awaited meal will have developed into a wedding feast for the landlady and young Prochazka.

Schweyk marches on. The blizzards on those interminable eastern steppes, where the distance to Stalingrad always remain about the same, cloak the sun by day and the moon by night from the view of the good soldier Schweyk, who set out to give the great Hitler a helping hand.

Epilogue

It is likewise deep in the eastern steppes that the good soldier Schweyk personally encounters his Führer Hitler. Their conversation in the driving snow is brief and almost entirely swallowed by the storm. The gist of this historic conversation is that Hitler is asking Schweyk whether he knows the way back.

[GW *Schriften zum Theater* 3, pp. 1186–96. Dated New City, May 1943. This preliminary summary of the story was made for Kurt Weill, and it contains some differences from the final text. Thus the interludes balance more neatly; there is no interlude after scene 2; and Goebbels appears instead of von Bock. This is the only version which makes Prochazka a music student (scene 3) and has Schweyk preparing for an attack of rheumatism (scene 7). It omits the Chaplain and the singing of the 'German Miserere', and the ending is unlike that of any of the scripts.]

STAGING

The Chalice bar in Prague forms the centre of the set. Black oak panelling, bar with brass fitting, electric piano with a transparent top in which the moon and the flowing Moldau can appear. In the third act only a part of the Chalice appears to Schweyk in his thoughts and dream: his own table. Schweyk's 'Anabasis' shown in this act; move in a circle around this part of the Chalice. The length of his march can be indicated by such devices as having the peasants' hut roll forwards or backwards, growing larger or smaller in the process.—The interludes should be played in the style of a grisly fairy tale. The whole Nazi hierarchy (Hitler, Goering, Goebbels) can appear in all of them (plus Himmler and von Bock as the case may be). The satraps can accentuate the verses with shouts of 'Heil!'

Editorial Note

I. GENERAL

Brecht's Schweik play derives from Jaroslav Hasek's novel *The Adventures of the Good Soldier Švejk* [or Schweik] *in the World War*, or more precisely from its German translation by Grete Reiner, which was first published in 1926 and from then on remained one of Brecht's favourite books. It was promptly dramatized by Max Brod, the Prague German writer who was responsible also for the publication of Kafka's posthumous novels, and by the German humorist Hans Reimann. The resulting play was one of those chosen by Erwin Piscator for his first season with his own company in Berlin in 1927-8, when Brecht was one of his team of dramaturgs, and because it seemed far too conventional and static for the form of production which Piscator had in mind, which was to make use of a treadmill stage and George Grosz projections, it was radically overhauled by this team. In Brecht's own mind he himself was the main author of the Piscator version of this play; thus according to *The Messingkauf Dialogues* 'he did Schweik for him entirely' However all other accounts give Piscator's principal dramaturg Felix Gasbarra (whom Brecht did not like) an equal or even greater share in the new adaptation, and there is nothing in Brecht's papers to bear him out, beyond his pencilled title-page to the script: 'Adventures of the Good Soldier Schweik. / Brecht, Gasbarra, Piscator, G. Grosz.' Nor, so far as we know, did either he or his editors ever contemplate publishing it among his own works, even though these contain a number of adaptations, in several of which he had collaborators. It first appeared in 1974, in Herbert Knust's *Materialien zu Bertolt Brechts 'Schweyk im zweiten Weltkrieg'* (Suhrkamp-Verlag, Frankfurt), which gives a much fuller account of the play's evolution than we can do here.

Brecht's copy was probably sent him from Russia by Piscator in the early 1930s—Knust points out that it is on Russian paper—when there was some question of the two men collaborating on a script for Mezhrabpom-Film. It differs from the Brod-Reimann version above all in its attempt to match the 'epic' and picaresque form of Hašek's unfinished masterpiece. In his journal Brecht termed it a 'pure montage from the novel', though in fact it incorporated some of the earlier version and was performed under the original adaptors' names (since they held the rights and were

prepared to accept this arrangement). Briefly, its first part, corresponding to the novel's part I, is divided into the following short scenes (the numbers of the relevant chapters in the book being given in brackets): 1. [1] At Schweik's. / 2. [1] At the Chalice. / 3. [7] At Schweik's (where he determines to volunteer). / 4. [7] Street scene (with Schweik in the wheelchair shouting 'To Belgrade!'). / 5. [8] Recruiting office (medical inspection). / 6. [8] Military hospital. / 7. [8] Streets in Prague (with Schweik under arrest). / 8. [9] Transformation scene: detention room, chapel, and sacristy. / 9. [14] Lieutenant Lukaš's rooms (Katz, the chaplain, loses his batman at cards). / 10. [14] The same (where Schweik fulfils the lady's wishes). / 11. [14] The same (preparatory to the stealing of the dog). / 12. Street in Prague (Schweik and sapper Voditchka as dog thieves). / 13. [3 of part II] The same (Voditchka making anti-Hungarian gestures). / 14. [15] Barrack square (the colonel recognizes his dog and packs Schweik and Lukaš off to the front).

The second part, drawn from parts II and III of the novel, is in a slightly confused order (e.g. the numbering of the second scene) and differs from the staged version in its ending. (Piscator himself recounts that his team suggested various alternatives, but that he finally settled for Gasbarra's idea, based on Cadet Biegler's dream in the original, of a scene in heaven with Schweik and war wounded parading before God; when this proved under-rehearsed however it was changed for the parting scene between Schweik and Voditchka, who agree to meet 'at six o'clock after the war'.) Again, the scenes are as follows: 1. [II/1] Transformation scene: in the train, changing to the station police office at Tábor. / 5. [II/2] Film, with Schweik marching (the start of Schweik's 'Anabasis') and episode with the herdsman. / 2. [II/2] Transformation scene: country road, then Putim police station, then film. / 3a. In a troop train (about Baloun and his hunger). / 3b. Schweik rejoins his unit. / 3c. [III/2] In the train (where Baloun has eaten the sardines). / 3d. [III/3] Beside the railway track (with Baloun doing physical jerks). / 3e. [III/2] Other side of the train (with Schweik made to do the same). Schweik here tells the 4268 episode as a story. / 4. [III/4] Battlefield. (He gets lost, puts on Russian uniform and is taken prisoner by a Hungarian unit of his own army. A shell bursts, and he is killed.) Though the typescript finished here, Knust's *Materialien* volume follows this with the closing scene which Brod wrote for Piscator after discussion with him and the dramaturgs. Called 'Schweik in Heaven, An

Epilogue', it consists of two parts, the first of which shows the entrance gate guarded by an angelic sentry, with a crowd of mutilated soldiers of all nations trying to get in. Among them are Schweik and Marek, who get through only by jumping on to the back of a general's staff car. Part 2 then shows them being marched before the Supreme Commander, who finally accepts Marek as 'a good honest atheist' but rejects Schweik on the grounds that 'the fellow will simply put a spanner in any works'. He is packed off back to earth, where he arrives just in time to keep his rendezvous with Voditchka in the Chalice.

In returning to this material with a view to reworking it for the Second World War, Brecht found little that he could incorporate as it stood. Discussing his plan with his son on his return from New York at the end of May 1943 he realized that he was changing Schweik's character by allowing him to risk frequenting so dangerous a pub as the Chalice (which figures little in the book), and sacrifice himself for the sake of Baloun. 'That indeed is where the situation is sharper than in 1914', he noted in his journal for 27 May, where he reports that he had been re-reading the novel in the train on the way back:

once again i was overwhelmed by hašek's vast panorama and the authentically un-positive point of view which it attributes to the people, they being themselves the one positive element and accordingly incapable of reacting 'positively' to anything else. whatever happens schweik mustn't turn into a cunning underhanded saboteur. he is merely an opportunist exploiting the tiny openings left him.

He had already written the 'Story' for Kurt Weill before leaving New York, and it seems that he soon showed this to Eisler, who commented that Schweik could not be seen as a typical 'little man' and suggested that Brecht's play ought to end with him leading Hitler to Stalingrad, not back home. Another diary entry, of the 29th, shows that he also discussed it with Peter Lorre, whom he evidently had in mind for the title part, while again on 12 July when the first rough version was already complete, he noted that

the language of the play differs substantially from that of the german hašek translation. south german elements have been worked in, and in various ways the gest is different. so it would be wrong, e.g., to speak bohemian dialect in this play; in other words the tone of voice shouldn't be bohemian-german.

Scene 2 of the first part of the Piscator adaptation is the only one to have survived in recognizable form, and even there Brecht changed the sex of the landlord Palivec, turning him (doubtless for Lotte Lenya's sake) first into Mrs Natonek, then changing her name to Kopecka. Most of Hašek's characters, too, he abandoned, so that aside from a brief glimpse of Father Lacina (the less interesting of Hašek's two disgraceful chaplains) only Baloun and the police agent Brettschneider appear with Schweik in the play; all other characters are Brecht's or belong to history. But the basic concept and a number of subsidiary situations or elements were transplanted into the new terms: the stealing of the dog for instance, Baloun's embarrassing appetite, the incident of waggon 4268, the notion of an 'Anabasis' with its semi-conscious loss of orientation, and above all the whole Schweikian approach to authority, patriotism and war. Though the songs were mainly Brecht's, three of Schweik's chants are taken from the book—'He stood beside his gun' (p. 119) from II/2; 'When we marched off to Jaromiř' (p. 124) from III/4 (Piscator II/5); and 'When Hitler sent for me' (p. 126) from I/8 (Piscator I/7)—while Baloun's 'Beseda' song (p. 107) can be found in III/4, where it is described as 'the song the Czech regiments sang when they marched and bled for Austria at Solferino'. And despite what Brecht says, Schweik's whole way of speaking derives from the novel. If at times it resembles that of Mother Courage, or Matti (in *Puntila*), or even Galy Gay (in *Mann ist Mann*: another part which Brecht identified with Lorre), this is only because they too in some measure reflect the same source.

The new play was at first simply called *Schweyk*, the phrase 'in the Second World War' making its appearance as an addition on the title-page of what seems to be the latest of the four versions in the Brecht Archive. The other three of these all date from 1943 and consist of a bound copy in Brecht's typing, dated Santa Monica, July 1943; a largely identical Brecht typescript (but divided into acts and with a different ending) which he gave to Peter Lorre; and a fair copy not typed by Brecht. In summarizing their slight differences scene by scene we will refer to them respectively as the bound script, the Lorre script, the fair copy and the old Berliner Ensemble script (it bears that company's stamp). The first printed text appeared in volume X of the collected *Stücke* (1958), though a duplicated stage script was available from Henschel-Verlag in East Berlin in 1956.

2. SCENE-BY-SCENE ACCOUNT

Prologue in the Higher Regions. Our text is identical with the bound script. The fair copy has a different version of the first three lines:

HITLER

My dear Himmler, forty-eight is the age I've now got to.
And so henceforward 'now or never' must be my motto.
Accordingly I've just decided ['to bid for world domination',
etc.].

This version ends, after 'how does the Little Man view me?':

HIMMLER

My Führer, he loves you—at any rate that's the plan—much
as the Little Man in Germany loves you too. The Gestapo
arrange all that.

HITLER

It's just as well they do.

—thus matching the last lines of the subsequent Interlude between scenes 3 and 4, and between scenes 6 and 7.

Scene 1. Virtually unchanged from the bound script.

Scene 2. Virtually unchanged. The report about the banker Kruscha and Bullinger's reaction to it were additions to the first script.

Interlude in the Lower Regions. Is in the bound script but not in the Lorre script, the fair copy, the old Berliner Ensemble script or the duplicated stage script.

Scene 3. The fat woman is an addition by Brecht on the bound script, which remained virtually unchanged.

Interlude in the Higher Regions. Unchanged. In the Lorre script this begins Act 2.

Scene 4. One or two cuts have been made since the bound script, notably a characteristic Schweyk story following after 'Yes, the Moldau' on p. 99. The *Moritat* 'Heinrich schlief bei seiner Neuvermählten', unattributed by Brecht, who gives it as an appendix in the printed version, is by J. F. A. Kazner (1779); according to Dr Sammy McLean it is also known as 'Heinrich und Wilhelmine', 'Die Geisterstimme von Mitternacht', and

'Der ungetreue Liebhaber'. Eisler set it to the tune of a south German folksong.

In the bound script this scene was originally followed by a second 'Interlude in the Lower Regions', which Brecht cut.

Scene 5. A speech by Schweyk about sabotage, added as an afterthought to the bound script, was dropped in the fair copy.

Scene 6. All through this scene the references were to the London, not the Moscow Radio. The amendment was made on the bound script, but not on the other three, nor on the duplicated stage script. Kati's remark about Schweyk's hat (p. 114) was an addition to the bound script, which also lacks the Song of the Moldau at the end, presumably because Brecht was still re-writing it (besides those in the other scripts, there are seven separate versions of this song). Eisler's melody for it starts with a quotation from Smetana's *Vltava*.

In the Lorre script Act 2 ends here.

Interlude in the Higher Regions. Stalingrad replaced Rostov on the bound script, and the same with the numerous references that follow up to the end of the play.

Scene 7. Virtually unchanged.

Scene 8. The drunken chaplain was originally not Bullinger's brother but the Reverend Matz from Rosenberg. The relevant amendments were made on the bound script, but the fair copy and the duplicated stage script still have him as Matz. An ironically meant reference to alleged Russian torture chambers was also added, and taken over into the fair copy; after which it was dropped. The price specified in Mrs Kopecka's song 'Come right in and take a seat' (which was accompanied by a melody in Brecht's characteristic notation) was 80 Kreuzers in the bound script; the final cry 'On to Stalingrad!' was missing; and there were a number of other even smaller changes.

Epilogue. Three of the scripts and the duplicated stage script originally had Schweyk saying of the south (p. 137): 'But there are piles of corpses there'.

HITLER

Then I'll push East.

SCHWEYK

Then we'll have the British in our hair.

(We have omitted the stage directions.) This is changed to the

present reading on the bound script alone; hence it seems likely (as with the references to the London Radio) that Brecht used this script for his final amendments in the 1950s. In the Lorre script (as cited in Knust's *Materialien*) the ending is different from mid-scene on; thus after 'where the front or the rear is' [p. 136] the Führer asks:

Can you tell me, Mr Schweyk, the quickest way to the rear?

SCHWEYK

Excuse me, the way to what?

HITLER

To the rear!

SCHWEYK

Beg to report, sir, this blizzard makes it impossible to hear.

HITLER

Because you're not trying. Just wait; you egotists arouse my fury.

SCHWEYK

Oh, calm down. What's the good of being so gory?

HITLER

I have made history.

SCHWEYK

They'll say 'That's just *his* story'.

HITLER

Don't you realize that ten peoples are now subject to my directing?

SCHWEYK

Not least the Germans, who are supposed to do the subjecting.

HITLER

The average German's useless without my grip to keep him steady.

SCHWEYK

You kicked him too hard when he was down; he's a master race already.

HITLER

When I took over I found his international reputation had been sinking.

Now you and he are fighting side by side.

SCHWEYK

I'd rather he and I were drinking.

HITLER

It was always my assumption that the stronger man had to win.

SCHWEYK

And so it turned out.

HITLER

Mr Schweyk, if somebody gets done in,
It's because history has decreed he should disappear.
Now take the case of Adam . . .

SCHWEYK

Tell me as we go, or we'll get frozen solid here.
You want a place where you can feel secure.
Right; but the cold may be too much for you to endure.
I can find the way backwards, though, I'm sure I can
Backwards will suit me fine, make me another man.
As for the future, nobody can tell:
What suits me fine may suit you none too well.
But let me lead you now, not that I care:
Without a leader you won't get anywhere.
Schweyk picks up his rifle and shoves Hitler in front of him. They stop at the signpost, and Schweyk turns his torch on it. He reads 'Stalingrad—5 km', and marches on in that direction with Hitler before him. The darkness and the storm swallow them up.

The final chorus then follows as in our version.

THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE

Texts by Brecht

NOTES TO THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE

1. Realism and stylization

Actors, stage designers and directors normally achieve stylization at the cost of realism. They create a style by creating 'the' peasant, 'the' wedding, 'the' battlefield; in other words by removing whatever is unique, special, contradictory, accidental, and providing hackneyed or hackneyable stereotypes the bulk of which represent no mastery of reality but are just drawings of drawings—simple to provide since the originals already have elements of style in them. Such stylists have no style of their own, nor any wish to grasp that of reality; all they do is to imitate methods of stylization. Plainly all art embellishes (which is not the same as glossing over). If for no other reason it must do so because it has to link reality with enjoyment. But this kind of embellishment, formulation, stylization, must not involve phoneyess or loss of substance. Any actress who plays *Grusha* needs to study the beauty of Brueghel's 'Dulle Griet'.

2. Tension

The play was written in America after ten years of exile, and its structure is partly conditioned by a revulsion against the commercialized dramaturgy of Broadway. At the same time it makes use of certain elements of that older American theatre whose forte lay in burlesques and 'shows'. In those highly imaginative manifestations, which recall the films of that splendid man Chaplin, the tension focused not merely on the progress of the plot (or only in a much cruder and larger sense than now), but more on the question 'How?'

Nowadays when we are 'offered an amusing trifle' it is simply the feverish efforts of a rapidly ageing whore who hopes that her graceless tricks will serve to postpone or annul the moment when her painful and frequently-operated vagina has once again to be handed over to a client. The pleasure of telling a story is inhibited by fear that it will fall flat. Unleashing this pleasure however does not mean freeing it from all control. Detail will be of the greatest importance, but that does not mean that economy won't be of great importance too. Imagination can be applied to the achievement of brevity. The point is not to abandon something rich. The worst enemy of true playing is playing about; meandering is the sign of a bad story-teller, while cosiness is just self-satisfaction and to be despised as such. Direct statement is among the most important methods of epic art, and it is as fair to [speak] of epic restlessness as of epic repose.

3. *The chalk circle*

The test of the chalk circle in the old Chinese novel and play, like their biblical counterpart, Solomon's test of the sword, still remain valuable tests of motherhood (by establishing motherliness) even if motherhood today has to be socially rather than biologically defined. The 'Caucasian Chalk Circle' is not a parable. Possibly the prologue may create confusion on this point, since it looks superficially as if the whole story is being told in order to clear up the argument about who owns the valley. On closer inspection however the story is seen to be a true narrative which of itself proves nothing but merely displays a particular kind of wisdom, a potentially model attitude for the argument in question. Seen this way, the prologue becomes a background which situates the practicability and also the evolution of such wisdom in an historic setting. And so the theatre must not use the kind of technique developed by it for plays of the parable type.

4. *Background and foreground*

In the English language there is an American term 'sucker',

and this is exactly what Grusha is being when she takes over the child. The Austrian term 'die Wurzen' means something of the same sort, while in High German one would have to say 'der Dumme', 'the fool' (as in the context 'they've managed to find somebody fool enough to . . .'). Her maternal instincts lay Grusha open to troubles and tribulations which prove very nearly fatal. All she wants of Azdak is permission to go on producing, in other words to pay more. She loves the child; her claim to it is based on the fact that she is willing and able to be productive. She is no longer a sucker after the hearing.

5. [*Setting of the play*]

The play's setting needs to be very simple. The varying backgrounds can be indicated by some form of projection; at the same time the projections must be artistically valid. The bit players can in some cases play several parts at once. The five musicians sit on stage with the singer and join in the action.

6. *Incidental music for the Chalk Circle*

Aside from certain songs which can take personal expression, the story-teller's music need only display a cold beauty, but it should not be unduly difficult. Though I think it is possible to make particularly effective use of a certain kind of monotony, the musical basis of the five acts needs to be clearly varied. The opening song of Act 1 should have something barbaric about it, and the underlying rhythm be a preparation and accompaniment for the entry of the governor's family and the soldiers beating back the crowd. The mimed song at the end of the act should be cold, so that the girl Grusha can play against the grain of it.

For Act 2 ('The Flight into the northern mountains') the theatre calls for thrustful music to hold this extremely epic act together; none the less it must be thin and delicate.

Act 3 has the melting snow music (poetical) and, for its main scene, funeral and wedding music in contrast with one another. The song in the scene by the river has the same

theme as the Act 1 song in which Grusha promises the soldier to wait for him.

In act 4 the thrustful, scurrilous Ballad of Azdak must be interrupted twice by Azdak's two songs (which definitely have to be simple to sing, since Azdak must be played by the most powerful actor rather than by the best singer). The last (lawsuit) act demands a good dance at the end.

7. Behaviour of the Singer in the last scene of Act 1

The playwright suggested that the general principle of having the scenes embody specific passages of the singer's song in such a way that their performance never overshadows the singer's solo performance to the villagers ought to be deliberately abandoned in production.

8. Casting of Azdak

It is essential to have an actor who can portray an utterly upright man. Azdak is utterly upright, a disappointed revolutionary posing as a human wreck, like Shakespeare's wise men who act the fool. Without this the judgement of the chalk circle would lose all its authority.

9. Palace revolution

The curt orders given offstage inside the palace (sporadically and in some cases quietly so as to imply the palace's vast size) must be cut once they have served to help the actors at rehearsal. What is going on onstage is not supposed to be a slice of some larger occurrence, just the part of it to be seen at this precise spot outside the palace gate. It is the entire occurrence, and the gate is *the* gate. (Nor is the size of the palace to be conveyed in spatial terms.) What we have to do is replace our extras with good actors. One good actor is worth a whole battalion of extras; i.e. he is more.

[Sections 1-6, 8, and 9 are from GW *Schriften zum Theater* 17, pp. 1204-8. The typescripts suggest that 1-4 belong together, and we have put them in their original,

possibly accidental but still logical order. They and section 6 are thought to date from 1944. Sections 5 and 7 are notes accompanying the first version of the script that year, 7 being taken from BBA 192/178. The last two were written nearly ten years later, 8 being assigned to about 1953 by BBA while 9 relates to a rehearsal held on 4 December of that year in preparation for Brecht's Berliner Ensemble production.]

DANCE OF THE GRAND DUKE WITH HIS BOW

Oh, the green fields of Samara!
Oh, the bent backs of a warlike race!
O sun, o domination!

I am your prince. This bow they are bringing
Is elm tipped with bronze, strung with flexible sinew.
This arrow is mine, which I mean to send winging
To plunge itself deep, O my enemy, in you.

Oh, the green fields of Samara!
Oh, the bent backs of a warlike race!
O sun, o domination!

Off, off to the fight, bowstring taut. Aren't you frightened
To feel how much deeper the bronze will go worming
Its way through your flesh as the bowstring is tightened?
Fly, arrow, and cut up that enemy vermin!

So I tug, tug and tug at the bow that they made me.
How strong are my shoulders! A fraction more. Steady . . .
Why, it's broken! All lies! Elm and bronze have betrayed me.
Help, Help! God have mercy: my soul's so unready.

Oh, the cattle-stocked fields of Samara!
Oh, the bent backs of a warlike race!
Oh, the cutting up of the enemy!

[BBA 28/23-4. A pencilled note by Elisabeth Hauptmann, dating probably from the 1950s or later, identifies this as material discarded from the play.]

CONCERNING THE PROLOGUE

Your dislike of the prologue puzzles me somewhat; it was the first bit of the play to be written by me in the States. You see, the problem posed by this parable-like play has got to be derived from real-life needs, and in my view this was achieved in a light and cheerful manner. Take away the prologue, and it becomes impossible to understand on the one hand why it wasn't left as the Chinese Chalk Circle, and on the other why it should be called Caucasian. I first of all wrote the little story which was published in *Tales from the Calendar*. But on coming to dramatize it I felt just this lack of elucidatory historical background.

CONTRADICTIONS IN 'THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE'

1. *Main contradictions*

The more Grusha does to save the child's life, the more she endangers her own; her productivity tends to her own destruction. That is how things are, given the conditions of war, the law as it is, and her isolation and poverty. In the law's eyes the rescuer is a thief. Her poverty is a threat to the child, and the child adds to it. For the child's sake she needs a husband, but she is in danger of losing one on its account. And so forth.

Bit by bit, by making sacrifices, not least of herself, Grusha becomes transformed into a mother for the child; and finally, having risked or suffered so many losses, fears no loss more than that of the child. Azdak's judgment makes the rescue of the child absolute. He is free to award the child to her because there is no longer any difference between the child's interests and hers.

Azdak is the disappointed man who is not going to cause disappointment in others.

2. Other contradictions

The petitioners prostrate themselves before the governor as he goes to Easter Mass. Beaten back by the Ironshirts, they fight wildly among themselves for a place in the front row.

The same peasant who overcharges Grusha for his milk is then kindly enough to help her pick up the child. He isn't mean; he's poor.

The architects make utterly servile obeisances to the governor's ADC, but one of them has to watch the other two to see how they do it. They are not just natural arse-creepers; they need the job.

Grusha's spineless brother is reluctant to take in his sister, but furious with his kulak of a wife on account of his dependence on her.

This spineless brother cannot say boo to his kulak of a wife, but is overbearing to the peasant woman with whom he fixes up the marriage contract.

The motherly instincts of the peasant woman who takes in the foundling against her husband's wishes are limited and provisional; she betrays it to the police. (Likewise Grusha's motherly instincts, though they are so much greater, so very great, are limited and provisional: she wants to see the child into safety, then give it away.)

The maid Grusha is against war because it has torn her beloved from her; she recommends him always to stay in the middle in order to survive. However on her flight into the mountains she sings of the popular hero Sosso Robakidse who conquered Iran, in order to keep her courage up.

[*GW Schriften zum Theater* 17, pp. 1208–10. Assigned by BBA to 1954. However, Brecht's concept of main and subsidiary contradictions (i.e. conflicting elements in a situation) derives from Mao Tse-tung, whose pamphlet *On Contradiction* he seems to have read in 1955.]

SIDE TRACK

P: The people at X want to cut 'the flight into the northern mountains'. The play is a long one, and they argue that this whole act is really no more than a side track. One sees how the maid wants to get rid of the child as soon as she has got it away from the immediate danger zone; but then she keeps it after all, and that, they say, is what counts.

B: Side tracks in modern plays have to be studied carefully before one makes up one's mind to take a short cut. It might turn out to seem longer. Certain theatres cut one of Macheath's two arrests in the *Threepenny Opera* on the grounds that both might have occurred because he twice went to the brothel instead of clearing out. They made him come to grief because he went to the brothel, not because he went to it too often, was careless. In short they hoped to liven things up and finished by getting tedious.

P: They say it weakens the maid's claim to the child in the trial scene if her feeling for him is shown as subject to limitations.

B: To start with, the trial scene isn't about the maid's claim to the child but about the child's claim to the better mother. And the maid's suitability for being a mother, her usefulness and reliability are shown precisely by her level-headed reservations about taking the child on.

R: Even her reservations strike me as beautiful. Friendliness is not unlimited, it is subject to measure. A person has just so much friendliness—no more, no less—and it is furthermore dependent on the situation at the time. It can be exhausted, can be replenished, and so on and so forth.

W: I'd call that a realistic view.

B: It's too mechanical a one for me: unfriendly. Why not look at it this way? Evil times make humane feelings a danger to humanity. Inside the maid Grusha the child's interests and her own are at loggerheads with one another. She must acknowledge both interests and do her best to promote

them both. This way of looking at it, I think, must lead to a richer and more flexible portrayal of the Grusha part. It's true.

[From 'Die Dialektik auf dem Theater' in *Versuche 15*, Suhrkamp and Aufbau Verlags, 1956. As with other dialogues in that collection, Brecht shows himself as B, talking with some of his young collaborators: in this case P for Peter Palitzsch, R for Kathe Rülicke and W for Manfred Wekwerth. They were not literal transcriptions.]

Editorial Note

I. GENERAL

The Caucasian Chalk Circle brings together two threads that had been twining their way gently through Brecht's mind for several years before Luise Rainer asked him to write the play. They are of course the old Chinese story of the chalk circle, with its strong resemblance to the Judgement of Solomon, and the story of the eccentric, paradoxical judge which (though one can never be certain of this) Brecht appears to have devised for himself. Of the two the former probably has the longer ancestry—in Brecht's mind, that is—for Klabund's modern German dramatization was staged by Max Reinhardt at the Deutsches Theater, where Brecht had just spent a year as a junior dramaturg, on 20 October 1925. Brecht knew Klabund, or Alfred Henschke (as he was really called), from Munich as a writer and singer of ballads faintly akin to his own—he had actually replaced Brecht in the second performance of the *Red Raisin* programme that followed *Drums in the Night* there—and Klabund's wife the actress Carola Neher was to become one of Brecht's best-loved performers. Moreover his still earlier friend, her unrelated namesake Caspar Neher, was designer for the new play, while Elisabeth Bergner, then coming to the peak of her fame in Germany, played its leading part. 'We all saw it,' said Hanns Eisler later.

Described as '*The Chalk Circle*. A play in five acts from the Chinese, by Klabund', the text was published the same year (by J. M. Spaeth Verlag, Berlin). In fact it and its heroine the prostitute Haitang have a good deal more in common with *The Good Person of Szechwan* than with *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and almost certainly helped also to inspire the former play, which was already written by the time of Brecht's arrival in the U.S. Even the basic situation of the chalk circle differs from Brecht's version, in that the heroine (who naturally wins the test) is the biological mother and the false claimant a stepmother, while the symbolism of the circle is already underlined by Haitang and her princely lover in the first Act, as he draws one in white on a black wall, to represent the vaulted sky and the uniting of two hearts:

HAITANG: Whatever lies outside this circle is nothing. Whatever lies inside this circle is everything. How are everything and nothing linked? In the circle that turns and moves (*drawing spokes in the circle*)—in the wheel that rolls . . .

The test is conducted twice, first by the corrupt judge Tschu-tschu in Act 3, when Haitang loses, then again by her old lover, now become emperor, in Act 5. 'Take a piece of chalk', says the emperor to his master of ceremonies:

draw a circle here, on the ground before my throne, put the boy in the circle.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES: It has been done.

EMPEROR: And now, both you women,
Try to draw the boy out of the circle
At the same time. One of you take his left arm,
The other his right. It is certain
The right mother will have the right strength
To draw the boy out of the circle to herself.

The women do as he says. Haitang grips the boy gently; Mrs Ma tugs him brutally to her side. It is clear that this person indicating Haitang cannot be the mother. Otherwise she would have managed to draw the boy out of the circle. Let the women repeat the experiment. Mrs Ma once again pulls the boy to her side. Haitang, I see that you do not make the slightest effort to draw the boy out of the circle to you. What's the meaning of that?

Haitang explains that, having brought the child up, she knows that his arms are too delicate to stand tugging:

If the only way I can get my child is by pulling off his arms, then let somebody who has never known a mother's sufferings for her child pull him out of the circle.

EMPEROR *standing up*: Behold the mighty power locked in the chalk circle! This woman *indicating Mrs Ma* aimed to get control of all Mr Ma's fortune and to that end seized the child. Now that the real mother has been acknowledged it will be possible to find the real murderer . . .

for Mrs Ma had murdered their joint husband and accused Haitang of the crime. She now confesses, and together with the judge is pardoned by Haitang, who is left alone with her son and her imperial lover as the curtain falls.

At the time this slightly sugary play provoked Brecht to parody it, making Jackie Pall in *The Elephant Calf* of 1926 (Vol. 2 of the *Collected Plays*) pull his mother out of a 'doubtless most incompetently drawn circle' in order to prove contrariwise that he, the elephant child, is her son or alternatively her daughter. It also

stimulated Friedrich Wolf to write the counterplay *Tai-yang erwacht*, originally to be called *Haitang wakes up*. Roughly twelve years later, however, when Brecht was living in Svendborg, he took up the theme again and must have wondered whether to give it a Chinese or a European setting. The title *The Odense Chalk Circle* (Odense being the principal city of Fünen Island, where Svendborg is situated) seems to suggest the latter, but only a few fragmentary notes under this heading are left, e.g.:

the governor who has to act like a poor man. he pretends to eat too crudely and is sharply rebuked.

—and:

the gentry are scared because the governor has been driven out. they flee, fully expecting the peasantry to institute a bloodbath.

but the peasants don't come and there is no bloodbath.

by an oversight the judge appointed by the rebels is confirmed by the governor.

he pronounces judgement in the case of the two mothers.

There was to be a character called Hieronymus Dan, while another note suggests accompaniment by 'old and austere music (fifes, drums, organs)'. There is also however a more coherent scheme headed simply *The Chalk Circle*, and this is full of Chinese names. It appears to go thus:

I

how schao-fan gets to be a judge. he hides a hunted man. this upsets his wedding. the bride's family withdraws.

the peasants propose schao-fan for the judge's post. laughter all round.

the governor returns to power and sends a messenger appointing a judge: schao-fan.

the wedding takes place. ([what] was taken out is brought back in before the scene starts, silently or to a song: love is an irresistible force, etc.) the new judge gives judgement in a long lawsuit between the village and the bride's family. the judge finds for the village by sticking to the letter of the law.

II

the judge's pranks. he gets drunk in a case involving property and makes everything depend on what shape one of the litigants' nose is, etc.

he is put in gaol. his house is destroyed as if by a tornado.

the maid's wanderings with the child. through the dangers of the blizzard, through the worse dangers of the slums.

she rejects good food for the child and exposes it to hunger.

III

the mother denies the child. by acknowledging him she would be acknowledging that she is the judge's wife.

the maid adopts it, mutely, behind her own back, like a jack-daw whose thieving is hereditary.

IV

the judge gets his post back by mistake.

he bribes witnesses, he fails to examine them once bribed, he muddles everything, proposes marriage to a lady witness in open court and so on.

Section III was later shifted to precede Section I.

A single sample of the dialogue (BBA 128/05-06) shows how Brecht's interest was already centring on the disreputable judge, and goes on to outline a 'second part' in which the heroine is again called Haitang:

PEOPLE: he's a very bad judge. he breaks the law—no, he's never read it—ay, it was pure accident he got the job. he used to be a rice planter. one night an old man broke into his paddy-fields and begged him to have mercy: soldiers were after him. tao schun was sorry for him and hid him in his hut under some old baskets. that old man was the governor of the province, and after the foiling of the plot against him that night thanks to his flight and the planter's sympathy he quickly smote down his enemies. he had the planter trained and made him a judge. but tao schun was a great disappointment to him. he said quite openly in a bar that it just hadn't occurred to him to ask the old man what level of society he came from. and so he had treated him as a fugitive not as a

governor. but for that he'd no doubt have handed him over to the soldiers. he regretted having saved one of the oppressors. —for some time they've only been giving cases to tao schun when the senior judge is ill, like today.

PARTY WAITING *jump up appalled*: is it really tao schun on the bench today? if so we must have an adjournment. *to one another*: he won't accept a thing. we're sunk.

PARTY OPPOSITE: tao schun's in charge! hear that? it's all up, then. he won't accept a thing.

PARTY OF THE FIRST PART: hey, you! we've just been told one of our family's seriously ill. so we'd like to go home. would it make any difference to you if we held the case some other day? *in an undertone*: you dirty lot of vultures!

PARTY OF THE SECOND PART: it's all the same to us so long as the truth comes out.

THE FIRST FAMILY: you're right there. better lose our field tomorrow than today. let's go. *exeunt*.

THE FAMILY OPPOSITE *as they leave*: those crooks. wait till judge tai's recovered, that'll put paid to their claims even if it costs us 50 taels.

THE JUDGE, TAO SCHUN *sings*:
the judge is unwell, his thumb's feeling sore—
he pretends to count money
—so today there's a healthier look to the law.
but what d'you imagine a verdict is for?
eat your fill; then you'll stink all the more.

The few notes headed 'second part' follow:

haitang is caught in the civil war. together with the child, she is forced to take risks for the sake of the cause. she exposes the child to many dangers. their journey through the blizzard. cheerful song. their journey through the slums. (more dangerous.)

L:

in face of a snowstorm
i once was full of courage
but in face of people
i now am cowardly.
the snowstorm will not destroy us.
the earthquake is not avid for us.
but the coal merchant wants money
and the shipowner must be paid for the voyage.

Even before leaving Denmark however Brecht had begun work on *The Good Person of Szechwan*, for which this last 'aria' could easily have been written, and around the same time he seems to have set aside the oriental version of the story and started to see the judge figure in German garb. Thus Mother Courage, in the 1939 script of that play, recalls a corrupt judge in Franconia who sounds very like him (*Collected Plays*, Vol. 5) while the following year Brecht wrote the short story 'The Augsburg Chalk Circle' which appeared in the June 1941 issue of the Moscow *Internationale Literatur* and later in *Tales from the Calendar*. This develops the theme a lot further in the direction of our play, at the same time shifting it bodily to Brecht's own home town and the period of the Thirty Years War. Here the child's mother, fleeing before the invading Catholics, spends too long packing her clothes and runs off without it. Instead Anna the maid takes charge, watching by it much as does Grusha at the end of scene 2:

When she had spent some time, an hour perhaps, watching how the child breathed and sucked at its little fist, she realized that she had sat too long and seen too much to be able to leave without the child. Clumsily she stood up, wrapped it in its linen coverlet, took it on her arm and went out of the courtyard with it, looking shyly around like someone with a bad conscience, a thief [cf. p. 165].

She takes it off to her brother's in the country; he then makes her marry a dying cottager with the same results as in the eventual play. When the child's mother arrives 'several years' later and removes it she sues for her boy's return. The judge is one Ignaz Dollinger, who is described as 'a short but extremely meaty old man', famous for 'his homely hearings, with their cutting remarks and proverbs' and accordingly 'praised by the lower orders in a lengthy ballad'. 'Is he yours?' he bellows at her, accusing her of being after the dead father's property. 'Yes', she replies, '. . . If I can just keep him till he knows all the words. He only knows seven' (cf. p. 235). So he hears the case, concludes that both mothers are lying, and makes the test of the chalk circle, in which Anna lets the boy go, so that he is jerked to his mother's side.

Old Dollinger got to his feet.

'And that shows us', he announced in a loud voice, 'who the right mother is. Take the child away from that slut. She'd tear him cold-bloodedly in two.'

Three or four years later, when Jules Leventhal commissioned him to write the play for Broadway (which may seem inconsistent with his professed 'revulsion' but was not wholly so), the main structure and principal characters were ready in Brecht's mind, and the only remaining problems were setting and framework: what period and country to pick for it and how to relate it to the present day. The choice of medieval Georgia and of a contemporary Soviet framework must already have been made before he left New York in mid-March 1944 to return to Santa Monica and work on the script, for there is no sign of hesitation. Certainly the resulting first script is written with great sureness and an unusual scarcity of amendments and afterthoughts, while there are far fewer drafts and alternative versions than for some of the less complex or elaborately developed plays. The dating of the framework was to change; in the first script the prologue is set in 1934, without reference to the war. So were most of the names of the characters, which started by being mainly Russian and were Georgianized later; thus Grusha Vachnadze was originally Katya Grusha (or at one point Katya Kirshon), her soldier Volodya Surki, her brother Piotr and the lesser characters Petrov Petrovitch, Maxim Maximovitch and the like, while the princes were Boyars and Grusinia Georgia throughout.

Just when the various alterations were made is impossible to say. A journal entry of 8 May shows that Brecht was held up for a fortnight while he evolved social reasons for the judge's shabby eccentricities, grounding these ultimately in

his disappointment that the fall of the old rulers had not introduced a new era but merely an era of new ones. hence he goes on practising bourgeois justice, but in a disreputable, sabotaged version which has been made to serve the total self-interest of the judge. this explanation of course mustn't modify what i had in mind, and is for instance to be no excuse for *azdak*.

But this hitch is not reflected in the script. Nor, other than very marginally, is the remodelling of the heroine which another entry of 8 August says has taken him three weeks; he may have found Katya in the first script 'nicer' and not enough like Brueghel's *Dulle Griet* (who is glued on the title-pages of the three earliest scripts), but he does not seem to have altered her much, or provided those practical motives for her goodness which Feuchtwanger (who thought her 'too holy') had asked for. Altogether the changes to his first conception were surprisingly slight.

The first script bears a note by Brecht, 'first version' and is dated 'Santa Monica 5.6.44', the day when he posted it off to Luise Rainer. By August James and Tania Stern had embarked on a rough translation and Auden was prepared to do the verse. Brecht's second script, which contains the new version of the prologue and an *ad lib* epilogue, is similarly headed 'second version'; it must have been finished early in September, and consists very largely of carbons of the first, with some retyped pages. Its title-page gives the names of Eisler and Winge as 'collaborators' as well as that of [Ruth] Berlau who figures alone in the published version; John Hans Winge was an Austrian who had been working in a Los Angeles factory. Both scripts were bound for Brecht, and he seems to have made his amendments, e.g. of names, indifferently in one or the other. These were then taken into a third, undated script of 1944, which would appear to be the version photographed and put into the New York Public Library by Ruth Berlau early in 1945. Like the first two, it was typed by Brecht, but this time using upper- and lower-case letters. The play was first actually published in English, not in the Sterns' version, with Auden's lyrics, but in a new translation by Eric and Maja Bentley which appeared as one of *Two Parables for the Theatre* in 1948. The first German publication was in the special Brecht issue of *Sinn und Form* (Potsdam) the following year. This in turn was amended by Brecht for publication in the *Versuche* series in 1954.

2. SCENE-BY-SCENE ACCOUNT

The following are scene-by-scene notes on the main differences:

1. *The Struggle for the Valley*

In all three scripts and the *Sinn und Form* version this was called 'Prologue', and perhaps as a result many critics and directors have taken it as not forming an integral part of the play. However, as Brecht pointed out in his letter to his publisher Suhrkamp (p. 304), it forms the beginning of the first script and, though altered, was never thereafter omitted. In that first version, which sets the episode on Sunday, 7 June 1934, there are no references to war damage and the scene is nearly two pages shorter. We reproduce it in full on pp. 324-28. Another early note, which may even have preceded it, specifies:

scene: in the background a school with posters and a soviet flag.
a few dusty trees.

meeting: the folklore not to be overdone. those present are in their sunday best, no traditional costumes. among them a soldier on leave. a woman has a child on her lap. some of the men have very short haircuts.

the singer wears european garb. very comfortable; like all suits, his is somewhat crumpled. his musicians wear russian shirts; one of them has a georgian cap.

the tone of the discussion is very relaxed; a general delight in argument is evident. now and again one of the young people shoots a paper dart at a girl opposite and is told to shut up.

Within three months the scene had been rewritten virtually in its final form. Only its ending was different, being taken from the first version, from its last stage direction ('While they begin to move off', etc.) to the Voice's closing announcement. This was altered in 1954, after the *Sinn und Form* publication. Another minor point involved the switching of the names of the two collective farms, which was done on the second script but inadvertently overlooked in the *Sinn und Form* version. Here Hanns Eisler performed what he ironically called 'one of my great services to German literature' by telling Brecht that, given the insulting use of the term 'goat' for a woman in Germany (cf. the English 'cow'), he should not identify a goat farm with the name of Rosa Luxemburg.

2. *The Noble Child*

The scripts all amplify the opening stage direction by the words 'his manner of performing shows that he has done it a hundred times before; he turns the pages mechanically, casting an occasional glance at them. By slight movements he tells the musicians when to come in'. In the first script this ran on . . . 'and prefixes each entry of the actors by striking the ground with a wooden mallet'. See the note in Brecht's journal for 3 July 1944, which argues that the play's successive episodes are 'embodiments of the main incidents in his tale' and pictures him striking the ground thus and behaving like a director at a performance. 'this is necessary to avoid illusion and its intoxicating effects'. This idea is abandoned in number 7 of Brecht's notes above (p. 302).

Aside from the subsequent change of names, which has already been mentioned and which gives a much more Georgian flavour, the amendments to the first script are generally minor ones. The

dusty messenger originally entered just before the Governor's 'Not before divine service' (p. 152) which was followed by the exchange 'Did you hear', etc. (p. 154); this was altered only in the 1950s. The references to geese in the dialogue between Grusha (Katya) and Simon (Volodya Surki) were originally to fish, but appear in the second script. Katya's answer to the query 'Is the young lady as healthy as a fish in water' was

Why as a fish in water, soldier? Why not like a horse at a horse market? Can it pull two carts? Can it stand out in the snow while the coachman gets drunk? Being healthy depends on not being made ill.

SURKI: That won't happen.

—while when he asks if she is impatient and wants apples (not cherries) in winter she retorts 'Why not say "does she want a man before she's too old?"' This and the new stress on her aptitude for the role of 'sucker' ('You simple soul', 'You're a good soul', 'You're just the kind of fool', p. 163) represent the main differences between Grusha and the Katya of the first script.

Her song 'When you return I will be there' (p. 159) was a response to Konstantin Simonov's war poem 'Wait for Me', whose translation, by Nathalie Rene, Brecht had cut out of *Moscow News* and gummed in his journal at the time of the first work on *Simone Machard*:

Wait for me and I will come.
Wait, and wait again.
Wait where you feel sad and numb
And dreary in the rain.
Wait, when snows fall more and more,
Wait when days are hot . . .

etc., the 'I' of course here being a soldier. The remainder of the verse in this scene is virtually unchanged from the first version, though the 'temptation to do good' there was 'great' and not 'terrible'. It is interesting perhaps that the whole line in its present form should have been very firmly written in by Brecht on the second script; he clearly felt it to be important.

3. *The Flight into the Northern Mountains*

Much of the unrhymed verse (which was originally not broken into lines but divided by oblique strokes) differs in the first script, where it is mainly struck out without having yet been replaced by

the new versions; maybe these became detached from the script. In the second script it is all there, virtually as now. According to Rudolf Vápeník the song 'O sadly one morning' of the two Iron-shirts on p. 173 is translated from a Moravian folksong set (as one of his Slovak Folk Songs) by Bartók; it could be a by-product of Brecht's researches for *Schweyk*.

The first episode (Grusha getting milk from the old peasant) is one of those which Brecht retyped entirely for the second script, but despite some rewording it was not substantially changed. As revised it ended with the words 'Michael, Michael, I certainly took on a nice burden with you' (p. 167), followed by the stage direction:

She stands up, worried, takes the child on her back and marches on. Grumbling, the old man collects his can and looks expressionlessly after her.

The next episode (In front of the caravansary), which figures in the first script, was then cut, not to be restored till the collected edition; it was not performed in Brecht's production. The brief appearance of the two Iron-shirts which follows was slightly bowdlerised in the 1950s; before 'He lets himself be hacked to pieces by his superiors' (p. 173) it read 'When he hears an order he gets a stand; when he sticks his lance into the enemy's guts he comes'. The short scene with the two peasants is virtually unchanged from the first script, but once Grusha runs into the Iron-shirts there are a fair number of alterations; the central part of the episode being among the passages retyped by Brecht for the second script. The gist of his changes here is to make Grusha more evidently frightened of the soldiers than was Katya in the first version, and also to make it seem less likely that she is handing the child over to the peasants for good. Thus Katya was not 'frightened' (p. 175) and did not 'utter a little scream' (p. 176)—these directions appearing only from the third script on—while instead the first script made her laugh and say:

Corporal, if you're going to question me so severely I'll have to tell you the truth: that I'd like to be on my way. How about lowering your lance?

The episode of the bridge is once again almost as in the first script, though there is one possibly significant detail: the First Man originally greeted Katya's feat in exactly the words the First Soldier uses of the similarly-named Kattrin in the drum scene of *Mother Courage* (*Collected Plays*, Vol. 5): 'She's made it'. Brecht

changed this in the 1950s to 'She's across', presumably in order not to stress the connection between the two characters, both of whom were at that time played by the same actress, Angelika Hurwicz.

4. *In the northern Mountains*

Originally entitled 'Katya Grusha's sojourn at her cowardly brother's: her strange marriage and the return of the soldier'. A number of passages here were retyped and rewritten for the second script, for instance the episode of the melting snow, starting with the Singer's introduction (p. 135):

THE SINGER

The sister was too ill. The cowardly brother had to shelter her / She lay in the store room. Through the thin wall she heard him talking to his wife: / 'She'll soon be gone', he said. 'When she's well. How soft your breasts are . . .'. / The sister was ill till winter came. The cowardly brother had to shelter her. / The store room grew cold and she heard him talk to his wife. / 'When spring comes she'll be gone', he said. 'How firm your thighs are . . .'. / The room was cold. The road was colder. The winter was long, the winter was short. / The rats must not bite, the child must not cry, the spring must not come. / *Where to go when the snow melts?*

Still weak, Katya squats at the loom in the store room. She and the child, who is squatting on the ground, are wrapped in rugs and rags against the cold. The child cries. Katya tries to comfort it. [At this point there is a photograph of a Mongolian-looking woman at a spinning-wheel gummed into the script.]

KATYA: Don't cry, or do it quietly. Otherwise my sister-in-law will hear us and we'll have to go. Cockroaches aren't supposed to make any noise, are they? If we keep as quiet as cockroaches they'll forget we're in the house. Remember the cockroaches. *The child cries again.* Hush. The cold doesn't have to make you cry. Being poor's one thing, freezing's another. It doesn't get you liked. You keep quiet and I'll let you see the horses; remember the horses. *The child cries again.* Michael, we have to be clever, we've no wedding lines for my sister-in-law. If we make ourselves small we can stay till the snow melts. *She draws the child to her and looks, appalled, at one particular point* Michael, Michael, you've got no sense. If it's on account of the rats you don't need to cry. Rats are quite human. They have families. They store up food for 500 years.

PIOTR *slips in*: What's up? Why are you looking over at that corner, Katya? Is he frightened?

KATYA: What's he to be frightened of? There's nothing there.

PIOTR: I thought I heard scuffling in the straw. I hope it isn't rats. You wouldn't be able to stay with the child here.

KATYA: There aren't any rats. It'd be impossible to get a job anywhere with him.

PIOTR *sits by her*: I wanted to talk to you about Lisaveta . . .

Piotr is Lavrenti, and Lisaveta his wife Aniko, and the conversation continues much as in our text from 'She has a good heart' to 'Was I talking about Aniko?' (pp. 186-7), then:

You can't think how it upsets her not to be able to offer you anything better than this room. The big room above is too hard to heat. 'My sister will understand': I've told her that a thousand times, but does she believe me? She even blames herself privately for not being able to stand children. That's because she hasn't any of her own. Her heart's not strong enough, you see.

Grusha's song 'Then the lover started to leave' (p. 186) then comes after the second 'Grusha is silent' (p. 187). After the 'beat of the falling drops' (ditto) Piotr makes his proposal about the marriage, much as in our text except that Katya is to come back to live in his house again as soon as her bridegroom dies; the provision about her being allowed to stay on in the latter's farm for two years (p. 189) only appearing in the third script. The wedding ceremony itself was hardly changed except in this respect, thus on leaving (p. 190) Piotr/Lavrenti says 'I'll wait for you by the poplar at the entrance to the village, Katya'.

KATYA: Suppose it takes longer?

MOTHER-IN-LAW: It won't take longer.

The conversation among the guests (p. 193) was retyped virtually as now for the second script; in the first it ran:

THE GUESTS *noisily*: There've been more disturbances in the city, have you heard?—Ay, the boyar Rajok's besieged in the palace, they say.—The Grand Duke is back and it's all going to be like it used to be.—Lots of them coming back all the time from the Persian war.—They even say the old governor's wife's come back, and all the palace guard with her. *Katya drops the baking sheet. People help her to pick up the cakes.*

A WOMAN *to Katya*: You not feeling well? Too much excitement, that's it. Sit down and have a rest. *Katya sits down.*

THE GUESTS: Here today, gone tomorrow. Gone tomorrow, here today. But we still have to pay taxes.

KATYA *feebly*: Did someone say the palace guard had come back?

A MAN: That's what I heard.

ANOTHER: They say, though, that boyar Rajok's green flag is still flying over the palace. But the palace is being besieged. The old governor's wife is supposed to be living in one of the houses opposite.

KATYA: Who told you that?

THE MAN *to a woman*: Show her your shawl . . .

Thenceforward (p. 193) to the end of the scene the first version has been altered very little, the one significant addition (on the second script) being Grusha's explanation that she cannot go back to Nukha (originally Kachezia) because she had knocked down an Ironshirt.

5. *The Story of the Judge*

Most of the amendments to this scene are minor ones, and a good few date from 1954; the three scripts are thus close to one another, only the episode with the Fat Prince's nephew having been to some extent rewritten after the first script. Already there the Singer, who up to that point had only figured as such, began from the beginning of the Azdak ballad on (p. 213) to be 'The Singer together with his musicians', and this is oddly enough the only hint anywhere in the play or Brecht's notes that he may be required to perform Azdak's part, though Brecht seems to have taken this for granted in the production.

The Ironshirts' action in dragging Azdak to the gallows was added in 1954; previously they had been slapping him and Schauva genially on the shoulder. The Fat Prince's (the boyar Rajok's) first speech was altered and expanded in the rewriting for the second script; at the same time the chatter of the Ironshirts (p. 209) emphasizing their awareness of their (momentary) political importance was also added. Some small changes were made to heighten the dialogue where the Nephew pronounces his verdict (p. 211), both in the rewriting and in 1954. After the first two of Azdak's cases (respectively the doctor and Ludovica) the stage direction showing Azdak on his travels (p. 217) along the

Military Highway and the two accompanying verses of the Azdak ballad were introduced in 1954. The presence of Ironshirts behind Azdak's throne each time, with their flag as a tangible sign of support for him, was an addition on the first script, as was also the appearance of the Fat Prince's head on one of their lances (p. 220).

6. *The Chalk Circle*

In the first script there is a song near the beginning of the scene (after the Cook starts praying, p. 223) which was thereafter omitted:

SINGER *softly*:

The people say: the poor need luck
They won't get far by using their heads.
They won't grow fat by the work of their hands.
Therefore, it is said
God has devised for them games of chance
And the dog races. Likewise God
In his unremitting care for his poor folk
See to it that the tax inspectors sometimes slip.
For the poor need luck.

All through there are two elements missing from this version—the threat which the wounded corporal represents to Grusha, and Simon's confession that he is the father of the child. Instead Simon alleges that it was the son of one of his comrades. Then after the entry of the Governor's Wife, the First Lawyer goes on from his condemnation of the judge as 'about the lowest' (p. 226) to say

I insist you settle this matter out of court.

GOVERNOR'S WIFE: As you wish.

FIRST LAWYER: In view of the size of the estate which the child is inheriting, what do a few piastres count here and there? *On a nod from her he strolls over to Katya*: A thousand piastres. *Seeing Katya's look of uncertainty*: I am authorized to offer you a thousand piastres if the case can be kept from coming to court.

THE COOK: Holy Mary, a thousand piastres!

FIRST LAWYER *strutting off*: You see what your friends think.

KATYA: Are they trying to offer me money for Michael?

THE COOK: And they'd certainly go higher.

VOLODYA *darkly*: A meal that doesn't fill you makes you hungry, they say.

FIRST LAWYER *coming back*: Well, what about that thousand?

GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Is she being brazen enough to think it over? *Crosses to Katya*: You shameless person, don't you know you've to bow when I speak to you?

KATYA *bows deeply, then*: I can't sell him, Milady.

GOVERNOR'S WIFE: What? You call that selling, when you've got to return what you stole? You thief, you know it's not yours!

VOLODYA *sees Katya hesitating; at attention*: I attest that this is the child of my comrade Illo Toboridze, Mrs Anastasia Sashvili, sir.

GOVERNOR'S WIFE: Aren't you one of the palace guard? How dare you lie to me, you swine?

VOLODYA: Straight from the horse's mouth, sir, as the saying goes. *The Governor's Wife is speechless.*

Ironshirts have entered the courtyard and the Adjutant has been whispering to one of them. The Second Lawyer tugs the Governor's Wife's sleeve and whispers something to her.

THE COOK: They wouldn't be offering money if they weren't frightened of Azdak's favouring you. He goes by faces.

All this was dropped in the second script, which contained the present short bridge passage to cover the cut.

The first part of the actual hearing, up to Simon's testimony, was retyped after the first script, everything between Grusha's 'He's mine' (p. 228) and the middle of the Second Lawyer's speech beginning 'Thanks, Your Worship' (p. 229) being new. Originally Grusha was followed by the Second Lawyer saying

Excuse me, Maxim Maximovitch, but the court wants facts. My lord, . . .

FIRST LAWYER: My dear Pavlov Pavlovitch, I would have thought my address . . .

SECOND LAWYER: Is dispensable, my dear Maxim Maximovitch. My lord, by an unfortunate chain of circumstances, this child, [etc.]

This means that all reference to the Abashvili (or Sashvili) estates was lacking from the original scene, since the same is true of their mention in the Second Lawyer's speech later on p. 235. Much of the backchat between Azdak and Grusha likewise comes from the

second script, which first introduced Grusha's long diatribe starting 'You drunken onion' (p. 232) and ending 'than swinging from the gallows' (below). Her passage too with the Governor's Wife (p. 234) is a product of that script, but from then on till the final dance the first version has survived very largely intact. It ends with the Singer's final verses in a slightly different line arrangement, and without the ironic qualifying word 'almost', which was an addition to the second script. An epilogue follows, but was evidently written later; its use was to be optional, and it is not included in the third script or any of the published versions other than the *Materialien zu Brechts 'Der kaukasische Kreidekreis'* (Suhrkamp-Verlag, Frankfurt, 1966), from which the following translation has been drawn:

EPILOGUE

(ad libitum)

The ring of spectators from the two collective farms becomes visible. There is polite applause.

PEASANT WOMAN RIGHT: Arkady Tcheidse, you slyboots, friend of the valley-thieves, how dare you compare us members of the Rosa Luxemburg collective with people like that Natella Abashvili of yours, just because we think twice about giving up our valley?

SOLDIER LEFT *to the old man right, who has stood up*: What are you looking over there for, comrade?

THE OLD MAN RIGHT: Just let me look at what I'm to give up. I won't be able to see it again.

THE PEASANT WOMAN LEFT: Why not? You'll be coming to call on us.

THE OLD MAN RIGHT: If I do I mayn't be able to recognize it.

KATO THE AGRONOMIST: You'll see a garden.

THE OLD MAN RIGHT *beginning to smile*: May God forgive you if it's not one.

They all get up and surround him, cheering.

3. PROLOGUE FROM THE FIRST SCRIPT (1944)

Public square of a Caucasian market town, with peasants and tractor drivers of two collectivized villages seated in a circle, smoking and drinking wine; among them a delegate from the planning commission in the capital, a man in a leather jacket. There is much laughter.

THE DELEGATE *in an effort to get their attention*: Let's draw up an agreed statement, comrades.

AN OLD PEASANT *standing*: It's too soon for that, I'm against it; we haven't thrashed things out; I object on scientific grounds.

WOMAN'S VOICE *from the right*: Not thrashed it out? We've been arguing ten hours.

THE OLD PEASANT: And what about it, Tamara Oboladze? We've still got four hours left.

A SOLDIER: Correct. I'm surprised at you, Tamara. Who's going to get up from table when there's still a quarter of a calf left in the dish? Who's going to be satisfied with ten hours of argument if he can have fourteen?

A GIRL: We've done Cain and Abel, but nobody's even mentioned Adam and Eve yet. *Laughter.*

THE DELEGATE: Comrades, my head's in a whirl. *Groaning*: All this elaborate business about scientifically based goat breeding, all those examples to back it, all those subtle allusions, and then great masses of goat's cheese and endless jugs of wine to top it off! I suggest we close the discussion, comrades.

A TRACTOR DRIVER *decisively*: Even the best things must come to an end. Hands up those who want the discussion closed! *The majority raise their hands.*

THE TRACTOR DRIVER: The closure's carried. Now for the statement!

THE DELEGATE: The point at issue then *he begins writing in his notebook* is a difference between two collective farms, the Rosa Luxemburg and Galinsk, concerning a valley which lies between them and is not much good for grazing. It belongs to the Rosa Luxemburg collective *addressing those stage left of him* and is being claimed by the Galinsk collective, *to those stage right of him*, that's you people.

THE OLD MAN: Put down that we have to have the valley for raising our goats, just like we have to have other valleys, and it's always belonged to our village. *Applause left.*

A PEASANT RIGHT: What d'you mean, 'always'? Nothing's 'always' belonged to anybody. You haven't even always belonged to yourself. Twenty-five years ago, Chachava, you still belonged to the Grand Duke. *Applause left.*

THE DELEGATE: Why don't we say the valley belongs to you now?

THE PEASANT RIGHT: And when you say you have to have it for your goats, better put in that you've plenty more pasture land not more than half an hour from there.

A WOMAN LEFT: Put this down. If goats are driven half an hour every day they give less milk.

THE DELEGATE: Please don't let's go through all that again. You could have government aid to build stables on the spot.

THE OLD MAN LEFT: I'd like to ask you *addressing the Peasant Right* a small personal question. Did you or did you not enjoy our goat's-milk cheese? *On his not immediately replying*: Did you or did you not enjoy those four or five pounds you were tucking away? I'd like an answer, if you don't mind.

THE PEASANT RIGHT: The answer's yes. So what?

THE OLD MAN *triumphantly*: I wonder if the comrade knows why he enjoyed our goat's-milk cheese? *Pause for effect*. Because our goats enjoyed the grass in that particular valley. Why isn't cheese just any old cheese, eh? Because grass isn't just any old grass. *To the Delegate*: Put that in your book. *Laughter and applause right*.

THE DELEGATE: Comrades, this isn't getting us anywhere.

THE PEASANT RIGHT: Just write down why we think the valley ought to be made over to us. Mention our expert's report on the irrigation scheme, then let the Planning Commission make up its mind.

THE DELEGATE: The comrade agronomist!

A girl stands up right.

NATASHA: Put me down as Nina Meladze, agronomist and engineer, comrade.

THE DELEGATE: Your native village of Galinsk sent you to technical school in Tiflis to study, is that right? *She nods*. And on getting back you worked out a project for the kolkhoz?

NATASHA: An irrigation scheme. We've a lake up in the mountains that can be dammed so as to irrigate 2000 versts of barren soil. Then our kolkhoz can plant vines and fruit trees there. It's a project which can only be economic if the contested valley is included. The yield of the land will go up 6000 per cent. *Applause right*. It's all worked out here, comrade. *She hands him a file*.

THE OLD MAN LEFT *uneasily*: Put in a word to say that our kolkhoz thinks of going in for horse breeding, will you?

THE DELEGATE: Gladly. I think I've got it all now. There's just one more suggestion I'd like to make if I may, comrades.

It would please me very much if I could add a footnote to my report saying that the two farms have come to an agreement after having heard all the arguments put forward this day, Sunday June 7th 1934.

General silence.

THE OLD MAN LEFT *tentatively*: The question is, who does the valley belong to? Why don't we have another drink or two and talk it over? There are still some hours to go. . . .

THE PEASANT RIGHT: All right, let's take our time over the footnote, but do let's close the discussion as decided, specially as it's holding up our drinking eh, comrades?

Laughter.

VOICES: Yes, close the discussion. How about a bit of music?

A WOMAN: The idea was to round off this visit by the Planning Commission's delegate by listening to the singer Arkadi Cheidze. We've been into it with him. *While she is speaking a girl runs off to fetch the singer.*

THE DELEGATE: That sounds interesting. Thank you very much, comrades.

THE OLD MAN LEFT: But this is off the point, comrades.

THE WOMAN RIGHT: Not really. He got in this morning, and promised he'd perform something which had a bearing on our discussion.

THE OLD MAN LEFT: That'd be different. They say he's not at all bad.

THE PEASANT RIGHT *to the Delegate*: We had to telegraph to Tiflis three times to get him. It nearly fell through at the last minute because his chauffeur caught a cold.

THE WOMAN RIGHT: He knows 21,000 verses.

THE PEASANT RIGHT: It's very difficult to book him. You people in the Planning Commission ought to see he comes north more often, comrade.

THE DELEGATE: I'm afraid we're mainly involved with economics.

THE PEASANT RIGHT *with a smile*: You sort out the distribution of grapes and tractors; why not songs too? Anyhow here he is.

Led by the girl, the singer Arkadi Cheidze enters the circle, a thick-set man with simple manners. He is accompanied by four musicians with their instruments. Applause greets the artists.

THE GIRL *introducing them*: This is the comrade delegate, Arkadi.

THE DELEGATE *shakes his hand*: It is a great honour to meet you. I heard about your songs way back as a schoolboy in Moscow. Are you going to give us one of the old legends?

THE SINGER: An extremely old one. It's called 'The Chalk Circle' and comes from the Chinese. We perform it in a somewhat altered version of course. Comrades, it's a great honour for me to entertain you at the end of your day of strenuous debates. We hope that you'll find the old poet's voice doesn't sound too badly under the shadow of Soviet tractors. Mixing one's wines may be a mistake, but old and new wisdom mix very well. I take it we're all having something to eat before the performance begins? It's a help, you know.

VOICES: Of course. Everyone into the club.

As they disperse the Delegate turns to the girl.

THE DELEGATE: I hope it won't finish too late. I have to go home tonight, comrade.

THE GIRL *to the Singer*: How long will it take, Arkadi? The comrade delegate has got to get back to Tiflis tonight.

THE SINGER *offhandedly*: A matter of hours.

THE GIRL *very confidentially*: Couldn't you make it shorter?

THE SINGER *seriously*: No.

VOICE: When you've finished eating, Arkadi Cheidze will give his performance out here on the square.

Appendix:
The Duchess of Malfi

Introductory Note

Nearly every aspect of Brecht's adaptation of John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*—the text, the collaborators' shares, the dates of composition and revision, even the spelling of the title itself—offers puzzles and confusions almost impossible of certain solution.

Both the origin of the project to adapt the play and the process of that adaptation helped to ensure that the result would be neither a full-scale reworking (of the order of *Edward II* or *Coriolanus*) nor a purely Brechtian enterprise. Elisabeth Bergner, the actress, and her husband, the producer Paul Czinner, suggested the play as suitable material for Brecht's attention and Miss Bergner's talents. Around April or May 1943, work on the project began in New York. H. R. Hays, Brecht's early translator, also worked on the adaptation at this time. From this period dates *The Duchess of Malfy . . . An Adaptation for the Modern Stage* copyrighted 26 June 1943, by Brecht and Hays, and a variety of drafts in the Brecht Archive in Berlin. Many sheets from this copyrighted version became the basis for Brecht's further work. The text we print here represents the final joint work of Brecht and Hays on this copyrighted text.

In December 1943, Brecht invited W. H. Auden to join the effort, and shortly thereafter Hays withdrew. Bergner and Czinner seem to have suggested about this time that an effort be made to incorporate material from Webster's other tragedy, *The White Devil*, into the new adaptation, and some subsequent texts, including the one printed below, use scenes and lines from this play (see the editorial notes to Act one, scene 2 and Act two, scenes 3 and 5). The *Duchess* appears in Brecht's journal as a finished work on 21 July 1943, possibly a reference to the Brecht-Hays copyrighted version or to the text printed below. Brecht continued to work on it, however, for another journal entry covering his next New York visit (November 1943 to March 1944) describes it as 'not completely finished', while as late as June-July 1945 it is only described as finished 'in the rough'.

Although Brecht continued to write, Auden's name alone appears on a text, copyrighted 24 October 1945, which is largely reworked Webster with an excellently concise first act (apparently Auden's, work but following Webster's text closely). Brecht reappears with Auden in a version copyrighted on 4 April 1946, and continued his association with the project at least through the trial performances in Providence, Rhode Island (20 September

1946), in Boston (week of 23 September), in Hartford, Connecticut (30 September and 1 October), in New Haven, Connecticut (2-4 October) and in Princeton, New Jersey (7-8 October). Although the programmes and advertisements for the trial productions mention Brecht along with Auden, Brecht's name appears nowhere in the New York programme or in the generally condemnatory reviews. The final Broadway version had returned to Webster's original with some revisions and modernization; it even included the Julia subplot which had been excised from all the versions subsequent to the one printed here (see editorial note to Act two, scene 4).

It is not easy to make a precise statement of Brecht's practical contribution to adapting the *Duchess*. Certainly, he made important decisions about restructuring the play and rearranging large units of Webster's original. These decisions led him to write new scenes, such as the battlefield scene (2, 1) and the Cardinal's murder (2, 7), and to rewrite the play's conclusion. Brecht made many smaller and more detailed contributions as well. He understood Webster's English well enough to rearrange the play without having always to pass through a German version first. For example, having decided to increase the economic motive for Ferdinand's murder of his sister, Brecht adds (in English) some lines from Webster's IV.ii to his own 1, 2. For longer passages, sometimes sandwiched between pieces of Webster or of translated Brecht, he often used German. In some versions of 2, 6, for instance, the Duchess' reading of Ferdinand's letter appears in German in the text with two marginal translations, one quite literal and another, a replacement, more fluent and in near-blank verse. At another point, opposite an English speech near the end of the echo scene, appears the note, 'Brecht's rough translation' (see the editorial notes on 3, 1), suggesting that Brecht may have occasionally translated his own German. In one of the drafts for Ferdinand's concluding speech to 3, 2 (see the notes), some of the English spellings suggest Brecht's mental translation from German cognates or his use of similar sounds. H. R. Hays also testifies to Brecht's ability to read and write English, when he wished. Thus, while it might be accurate to say that Brecht's chief contribution lies in his wholly original scenes, the rearrangement of Webster's original, and some very clear-sighted choices of omissions and new emphases, it must be added that he often dipped into the minutiae of the play. He had the ability and the interest to work over single lines and short speeches.

Our text reproduces a copy in the possession of H. R. Hays; obvious typographical errors and misspellings have been silently corrected. Brecht Archive sources for material in the editorial notes are cited in the appropriate places.

(The editor of this text gratefully acknowledges the help of Lee Bliss, Edward Mendelson, and the New York Public Library Theatre Collection, Lincoln Center, and the financial assistance of the University of California Research Committee.)

A Note on *The Duchess*

by H. R. Hays

Early in 1943 Brecht came to New York and broached the idea of the *Duchess of Malfi* to me as a vehicle for Elisabeth Bergner, who was currently playing on Broadway in a whodunit. Brecht and I were both fond of the Webster piece and both felt that it sprawled too much for a successful production. The idea was to eliminate the anticlimactic series of deaths at the end, tighten up the script, and emphasize the implicit incest motivation of the duke. I remember that Bergner felt like discussing the project only after her performances and, in consequence, a series of midnight meetings resulted in a contract to prepare the play. We began working in April 1943. I did all of the writing, in the style of Webster, though Brecht and I discussed the scenes to be eliminated or added, and the content of scenes, and he sometimes contributed images. Brecht was very much at home in English literature and could speak English quite well (when he wasn't facing a congressional committee).

I remember that the death scene of the duchess produced a crisis. Brecht told me that Bergner had flopped in *Camille* and, in consequence, was frightened of the duchess's recumbent demise. Since some of Webster's finest writing is in the scene, Brecht suggested that we introduce the notion that if she could be kept on her feet she might be able to work off the numbing effect of the poison. Thus we were able to keep the lines in and pacify Bergner. Brecht was always practical.

We finished the script and Brecht, Bergner, and her husband-producer, Paul Czinner, disappeared in the direction of Hollywood. Brecht, I suppose, kept in touch with them, for in a letter of June 1943 he spoke of having shown the script to Eisler, who was ready to begin on the music as soon as Czinner gave him a contract.

At any rate, late in 1943 the Czinnings and Brecht were all back in New York. We had a meeting in my agent's office, at

which Mr Czinner announced that what the project needed was 'a British poet'. I hit the roof and told them to take my name off the script. Needless to say, the poet was Auden, whose name they hoped would be success insurance. Brecht did not at first withdraw, but later, when he saw what was happening, he too removed his name from the script. I think about the only one of our scenes left in the script, when the production went on, was the excommunication scene. The Auden version lasted about a week on Broadway and most of the critics found Bergner inadequate.

[Part of an essay originally written for inclusion in the volume of Brecht *Poems 1913-1956*. For the 1925 production of Dumas' *Camille* at the Deutsches Theater, with Bergner in the title part, Brecht was called in to rewrite the fifth act, where she dies. According to the director, Bernhard Reich, the script has been lost.]

The Duchess of Malfi

by

John Webster

An adaptation for the modern stage

by

Bertolt Brecht and H. R. Hays

Edited with notes

by

A. R. Braunmuller

CHARACTERS
in order of appearance

ANTONIO BOLOGNA

DELIO

FERDINAND, DUKE OF CALABRIA

BOSOLA

CASTRUCHIO

THE CARDINAL OF ANCONA

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

CARIOLA

OLD LADY

NEGRO PAGE

THE DUCHESS' TWO SONS

A MONK

A FLUTE PLAYER

A PHYSICIAN

A PRIEST

COUNT MALATESTA

COURTIERS · GENTLEMEN · LADIES · OFFICERS ·

PILGRIMS · MURDERERS · ATTENDANTS · SERVANTS ·

WAITING WOMEN

ACT ONE

Scene 1

*Presence chamber in the palace of the Duchess of Malfi
Delio and Antonio are on.*

ANTONIO

In these unruly times you are welcome, Cousin Delio.
I fear my letter drew you rudely
Out of sweet France. How did you like it there?

DELIO

'Tis still a land of sunshine. You will spend
In a fortnight what you may scarcely win there
In a twelve month. The French are exceeding skilful
In the arts, not those of love alone
But likewise martial stratagem. In Paris
I have studied their new fashion of gunnery.

ANTONIO

New come from Paris, how doth Malfi please you?

DELIO

So well that I am sorry I shall straightway
Be leaving it. I thank you, dear Antonio,
For my preferment with Lord Ferdinand.
'Tis agreed I follow him to the wars.

ANTONIO

Here comes the great Calabrian Duke.
*They give way as Duke Ferdinand and courtiers, Bosola and Castruchio
enter.*

FERDINAND

Are the galleys come about yet?

CASTRUCHIO

They are, my lord. But methinks you should not desire to
go to war in person.

FERDINAND

Now for some weighty reason. Why not?

CASTRUCHIO

It is fitting a soldier should rise to be a prince but not
necessary a prince should descend to be a captain.

FERDINAND

No?

CASTRUCHIO

No, my lord, he were far better do it by deputy.

FERDINAND

This war too nearly touches mine honour. Since the old Duke of Malfi fell, I have sworn to defend my sister Duchess in his stead. While I live she need fear no foe.

CASTRUCHIO

Believe my experience. That realm is never long quiet where the ruler is a soldier.

FERDINAND

Antonio, great master of our sister
Duchess' household! Your cousin pleases me.
His skill in this new science of gunnery
From France we'll soon know how to use in Cyprus.

Enter courtier.

COURTIER

Your brother, the Lord Cardinal and sister duchess will be here anon. The people line the streets awaiting your progress to the haven.

Crowd noises.

Hark, your grace may hear their lusty shouts.

Duke moves off towards the window to observe the crowd.

DELIO

Apart with Antonio.

The presence begins to fill. You promised me
To make me partaker of the natures
Of some of your great courtiers.

ANTONIO

Well, there's the Cardinal.

DELIO

What's his temper? They say he's a great scoundrel.

ANTONIO

He should have been Pope but did bestow bribes too
impudently. Some good he hath done.

DELIO

What's his brother, my new master?

ANTONIO

The Duke, there? A most perverse and turbulent nature.

DELIO

Twins?

ANTONIO

In quality. 'Tis said he and his brother are like plumtrees that grow crooked over standing pools. They are rich and o'erladen with fruit but none but crows, pies and caterpillars feed on them.

DELIO

What of their sister, the fair Duchess?

ANTONIO

You never fixed your eye on three fair medals
Cast in one figure of so different temper.
For her discourse it is so full of rapture
You will only begin then to be sorry
When she doth end her speech and wish, in wonder,
She held it less vainglory to talk much.
She throws upon a man so sweet a look
That it were able to raise one that lay
Dead in a palsy but in that look
There speaketh so divine a continence
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
Her days are practised in such noble virtue
That sure her nights, nay more her very sleeps,
Are more in heaven than other ladies' shrifts.
Let all sweet ladies break their flattering glasses
And dress themselves in her.

DELIO

Fie, Antonio,

Have you turned scholar studying of her virtues?

ANTONIO

I'll case the picture up. Only this much—
All her particular worth grows to this sum.
She stains time past, lights the time to come.

Enter Cardinal, Duchess and Cariola.

CARDINAL

Crossing to Ferdinand:

We are to part from you.

To Duchess:

And your own discretion
Must now be your director.

FERDINAND

You are a widow;
You know already what man is and therefore
Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence—

CARDINAL

No, nor anything without the addition, honour,
Sway your high blood.

FERDINAND

Marry? They are most lascivious
Will wed twice.

CARDINAL

Oh fie!

FERDINAND

Their livers are more spotted
Than Laban's sheep.

DUCHESS

Diamonds are of most value,
They say, that have passed through most jewellers' hands.

FERDINAND

Whores, by that rule, are precious.

DUCHESS

Will you hear me?
I'll never marry.

CARDINAL

So most widows say.
But commonly that motion lasts no longer
Than the turning of an hourglass, the funeral sermon
And it end both together.

FERDINAND

Now hear me:

You live in a rank pasture here in the court.
 There is a kind of honeydew that's deadly.
 'Twill poison your fame; look to it; be not cunning.
 For they whose faces do belie their hearts
 Are witches, ere they arrive at twenty years,
 Aye, and give the devil suck.

DUCHESS

This is terribly good counsel.

FERDINAND

Hypocrisy is woven of a fine small thread,
 Subtler than Vulcan's engine; yet believe it
 Your darkest actions, nay your privatest thoughts,
 Will come to light.

CARDINAL

You may flatter yourself
 And take your own choice privately to be married
 Under the eyes of night.

FERDINAND

Think it the best voyage
 That e'er you made, like the irregular crab,
 Which though it goes backward, thinks it goes right
 Because it goes its own way, but observe;
 Such weddings may more properly be said
 To be executed than celebrated.

CARDINAL

The marriage night
 Is the entrance into some prison.

FERDINAND

And those joys,
 Those lustful pleasures are like heavy sleeps
 Which do forerun man's mischief.

CARDINAL

Wisdom begins at the end. Remember it.

DUCHESS

To Cardinal.

We'll bear you company to your litter.

344 The Duchess of Malfi

Cardinal gives her his arm and they go out. Ferdinand beckons to Bosola and takes him apart.

FERDINAND

Giving him money.

There's gold.

BOSOLA

Whose throat must I cut?

FERDINAND

I give you that
To live in the court here and observe the Duchess,
To note all the particulars of her behaviour;
What suitors do solicit her for marriage
And whom she best affects. She's a young widow;
I would not have her marry again.

BOSOLA

No, Sir?

FERDINAND

Do not ask the reason but be satisfied.
I say I would not.
There is a place that I procured for you
This morning, the provisorship of the horse.

BOSOLA

The provisorship of the horse? Say then my corruption
Grew out of horse dung. Oh that your bounty
Should make me a villain! I am your creature
Exits.

DELIO

To Antonio.

I knew this fellow seven years in the galleys
For a notorious murder.

Duchess re-enters and goes to Ferdinand.

DUCHESS

I think that speech between you both was studied,
It came so roundly off.

FERDINAND

You are my sister.

This was my father's poignard, do you see?

Shows poignard.

I would be loth to see it look rusty since it was his.
I would have you give over these chargeable revels.
A visor and a mask are whispering rooms
That ne'er were built for goodness. Fare ye well,
And women like that part which, like the lamprey,
Hath never a bone in it.

DUCHESS

Fie, sir!

FERDINAND

Nay,

I meant the tongue, variety of courtship.
What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale
Make a woman believe. Farewell lusty widow.
He goes out. She pauses for a moment, then follows with courtiers.

VOICE

Way for the Duke! Make way for Duke Ferdinand! Way for
the Duke! The Duke is off to the wars!
Crowd noises.

Scene 2

Boudoir of the Duchess of Malfi.

Duchess and Cariola are on.

DUCHESS

Shall all this move me? If my royal kindred
Lie in my way unto this marriage,
I'll make them my low footsteps. And even now,
Even in this hate, as men in some great battles
By apprehending danger, have achieved
Almost impossible actions (I have heard soldiers say so),
So I, through frights and threatenings, will assay
This dangerous adventure. Let old wives report
I winked and chose a husband! Cariola,
To thy known secrecy I have given up
More than my life, my fame.

CARIOLA

Both shall be safe;
For I'll conceal this secret from the world
As warily as those that trade in poison
Keep poison from their children.

DUCHESS

Thy protestation
Is ingenious and hearty: I believe it.
Is Antonio come?

CARIOLA

He attends you.

DUCHESS

Good dear soul,
Leave me: but place thyself behind the arras
Where thou mayst overhear us. Wish me good speed.
Cariola goes behind the arras.
For I am going into a wilderness
Where I shall find nor path nor friendly clew
To be my guide.
Enter Antonio.

I sent for you; sit down;
Take pen and ink and write: are you ready?

ANTONIO

Yes.

DUCHESS

What did I say?

ANTONIO

That I should write somewhat. . .

DUCHESS

Oh, I remember:
After this triumph and this large expense,
It's fit (like thrifty husbands) we inquire
What's laid up for tomorrow.

ANTONIO

So please your beauteous excellence.

DUCHESS

Beauteous?

Indeed I thank you: I look young for your sake.
As my steward you have taken my cares upon
you.

ANTONIO

I'll fetch your grace the particulars
Of all your revenues and your expenses.

DUCHESS

Oh, you are an upright treasurer; but you mistook
For when I said I meant to make inquiry
What's laid up for tomorrow, I did mean
What's laid up yonder for me.

ANTONIO

Where?

DUCHESS

In heaven.

I am making my will (as 'tis fit princes should
In perfect memory), and I pray sir, tell me
Were it not better to make it smiling, thus,
Than in deep groans and terrible ghastly looks
As if the gifts we parted with procured
That violent distraction?

ANTONIO

Oh, much better.

DUCHESS

If I had a husband now this care were quit:
But I intend to make you overseer.
What good deed shall we first remember? Say.

ANTONIO

Begin with that first good deed began i' th' world,
After man's creation, the sacrament of marriage,
I'd have you first provide for a good husband:
Give him all.

DUCHESS

St. Winfrid, that were a strange will!

ANTONIO

'Twere strange if there were no will in you
To marry again.

DUCHESS

What do you think of marriage?

ANTONIO

I take it as those that deny purgatory,
It locally contains or heaven or hell;
There's no third place in it.

DUCHESS

How do you like it?

ANTONIO

My banishment, feeding on my melancholy,
Would often reason thus—

DUCHESS

Pray let's hear it.

ANTONIO

Say a man never marry, nor have children,
What takes that from him? Only the bare name
Of being a father, or the weak delight
To see the little wanton ride a cock-horse
Upon a painted stick or hear him chatter
Like a taught starling.

DUCHESS

Fie, fie, what's all this?

One of your eyes is bloodshot. Use my ring to it.
They say 'tis a good remedy. 'Twas my wedding ring
And I did vow never to part with it
But to my second husband.

ANTONIO

You have parted with it now.

DUCHESS

Yes, to help your eyesight.

ANTONIO

You have made me stark blind.

DUCHESS

How?

ANTONIO

There is a saucy and ambitious devil
Is dancing in this circle.

DUCHESS
Remove him.

ANTONIO

How?

DUCHESS
There needs small conjuration when your finger
May do it: thus, is it fit?

ANTONIO
What said you?

He kneels.

DUCHESS
Sir,
This goodly roof of yours is too low built;
I can not stand upright in't, nor discourse
Without I raise it higher: Raise yourself,
Or if you please, my hand to help you: so.

ANTONIO
Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness
That is not kept in chains and close-pent rooms
But in fair lightsome lodgings and is girt
With the wild noise of prattling visitants
Which makes it lunatic beyond all cure.
Conceive not I am so stupid but I aim
Whereto your favours tend: but he's a fool
That, being acold, would thrust his hands in the fire
To warm them.

DUCHESS
So, now the ground's broke,
You may discover what a wealthy mine
I make you lord of.

ANTONIO
Oh, my unworthiness!

DUCHESS
You were ill to sell yourself:
This dark'ning of your worth is not like that
Which tradesmen use in the city; their false lights
Are to rid bad wares off: and I must tell you

If you will know where breathes a complete man
(I speak it without flattery), turn your eyes
And progress through yourself.

ANTONIO

Were there nor heaven nor hell,
I should be honest. I have long served virtue
And never taken wages of her.

DUCHESS

Now she pays it.

The misery of us that are born great,
We are forced to woo because none dare woo us:
And as a tyrant doubles with his words
And fearfully equivocates, so we
Are forced to express our violent passions
In riddles and in dreams and leave the path
Of simple virtue which was never made
To seem the thing it is not. Go, brag
You have left me heartless; mine is in your bosom.
I hope twill multiply love there. You do tremble.
Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh
To fear more than to love me. Sir, be confident.
What is it distracts you? This is flesh and blood, sir;
'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster
Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake, awake, man,
I do here put off all vain ceremony
And only do appear to you a young widow
That claims you for her husband, and like a widow,
I use but half a blush in it.

ANTONIO

Truth speak for me,

I will remain the constant sanctuary
Of your good name.

DUCHESS

I thank you, gentle love;
I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus
As fearful to devour them too soon.

ANTONIO

But for your brothers?

DUCHESS

Still in his arms.

Do not think of them!

All discord without this circumference
Is only to be pitied and not feared:
Yet, should they know it, time will easily
Scatter the tempest.

ANTONIO

These words should be mine,
And all the parts you have spoke, if some part of it
Would not have savoured of flattery.

DUCHESS

Kneel.

Enter Cariola.

ANTONIO

Hah!

DUCHESS

Be not amazed, this woman's of my counsel:
I have often heard lawyers say a contract in a chamber,
Per verba de presenti, is absolute marriage.
Bless, heaven, this sacred gordian, which let violence
Never untwine!

ANTONIO

And may our sweet affections, like the spheres,
Be still in motion!

DUCHESS

Quickening and make
The like soft music!

ANTONIO

That we may imitate the loving palms,
Best emblem of a peaceful marriage,
That never bore fruit divided!

DUCHESS

What can the church force more?

ANTONIO

May fortune know no accident
Either of joy or sorrow to divide
Our fixed wishes!

DUCHESS

How can the church build faster?
We now are man and wife and 'tis the church
That must but echo this. Maid, stand apart;
I now am blind!

ANTONIO

What do you mean by this?

DUCHESS

I would have you lead your fortune by the hand
Unto your marriage bed:
(You speak in me in this, for we now are one.)
We'll only lie and talk together and plot
To appease my passionate kindred; and if you please,
Like the old tale, in Alexander and Lodowicke,
Lay a naked sword between us, keep us chaste.
Oh let me shroud my blushes in your bosom,
Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets!
Duchess and Antonio exit.

CARIOLA

Whether the spirit of greatness or of woman
Reign in her most, I know not; but it shows
A fearful madness. I owe her much of pity.

Scene 3

*A room in the Duchess' palace. Some months later.
Enter Bosola with a book.*

BOSOLA

What thing is in this outward form of man
To be beloved? We account it ominous
If nature do produce a colt, or lamb,

A fawn or goat in any limb resembling
 A man and fly from it as a prodigy.
 Man stands amazed to see his own deformity
 In any other creature but himself.
 But in our own flesh, though we bear diseases
 Which have their true names only taken from beasts
 And the most ulcerous wolf and swinish measles;
 Though we are eaten up with lice and worms
 And though continually we bear about us
 A rotten and dead body, we delight
 To hide it in rich tissue. All our fear,
 Nay all our terror is lest our physician
 Should put us in the ground to be made sweet.
 But I have work on foot: I observe our duchess
 Is sick a days, she pukes, her stomach seethes,
 The fins of her eyelids look most teeming blue,
 She wanes in the cheek and waxes fat in the flank
 And, contrary to our Italian fashion,
 Wears a loose-bodied gown; there's somewhat in it.
 I have a trick may chance discover it—
 A pretty one—I have bought some apricots,
 The first our spring yields.

Enter Antonio.

ANTONIO

Pointing to book.

You are studying to become a great wise fellow?

BOSOLA

Let me be simply honest.

ANTONIO

I do understand your inside.

BOSOLA

Do you so?

Shall I confess myself to you? I look no higher than I can
 reach: They are gods that must ride on winged horses. A
 lawyer's mule of a slow pace will suit both my disposition and
 business. For, mark me, when a man's mind rides faster than
 his horse can gallop, they both quickly tire.

ANTONIO

You would look up to heaven but I think the devil that rules
in the air stands in your light.

BOSOLA

Oh sir, you are lord of the ascendant, chief man with the
Duchess. Search the heads of the greatest rivers in the world,
you shall find them but bubbles of water. Some would think
the souls of princes were brought forth by some more weighty
cause than those of meaner persons. They are deceived, there's
the same hand to them, the like passions sway them; the
same reason that makes a vicar go to law for a tithe-pig and
undo his neighbours makes them spoil a whole province and
batter down goodly cities with the cannon.

Enter Duchess and ladies of her court.

DUCHESS

Your arm, Antonio: do I now grow fat?
I am exceeding short-winded. Bosola
I would have you sir, provide for me a litter
Such a one as the Duchess of Florence rode in.

BOSOLA

The duchess used one when she was great with child.

DUCHESS

I think she did.

To lady.

Come hither, mend my ruff,
Here, when? Thou art such a tedious lady
And thy breath smells of lemon peels—would thou hadst
done!

Shall I swoon under thy fingers? I am
So troubled with the vapours!

BOSOLA

Aside.

I fear too much.

DUCHESS

I have heard you say the French courtiers
Wear their hats on fore the king.

ANTONIO

I have seen it.

DUCHESS

In the presence.

ANTONIO

Yes.

DUCHESS

Why should not we bring up that fashion?
'Tis ceremony more than duty that consists
In the removing of a piece of felt.
Be you the example to the rest o' th' court.
Put on your hat first.

ANTONIO

You must pardon me.

I have seen in colder countries than in France
Nobles stand bare to the prince: and the distinction
Methought showed reverently.

BOSOLA

I have a present for your grace.

DUCHESS

For me, sir?

BOSOLA

Apricots, madam.

DUCHESS

O sir, where are they?
I have heard of none to year.

BOSOLA

Aside.

Good, her colour rises.

DUCHESS

As they are brought on.

Indeed I thank you; they are wondrous fair ones.
What an unskilful fellow is our gardener!
We shall have none this month.

BOSOLA

As she bites into one.

Will not your grace pare them?

DUCHESS

No, they taste of musk methinks; indeed they do.

BOSOLA

I know not; yet I wish your Grace had pared them.

DUCHESS

Why?

BOSOLA

I forgot to tell you the knave gardener,
Only to raise his profit by them sooner,
Did ripen them in horse dung.

DUCHESS

Oh you jest.

You shall judge. Pray taste one.

ANTONIO

Indeed, madam,

I do not love the fruit.

DUCHESS

Sir, you are loath
To rob us of our dainties. 'Tis a delicate fruit;
They say they are restorative.

BOSOLA

'Tis a pretty

Art, this grafting.

DUCHESS

'Tis so; a bettering of nature.

BOSOLA

To make a pippin grow upon a crab,
A damson on a blackthorn—

Aside.

How greedily she eats them!

A whirlwind strike off these bawd-farthingles!
For, but for that and the loose-bodied gown,
I should have discovered apparently
The young springal cutting a caper in her belly.

DUCHESS

I thank you, Bosola, they were right good ones,
If they do not make me sick.

ANTONIO

How now, madam?

DUCHESS

This green fruit and my stomach are not friends—
How they swell me!

BOSOLA

Aside.

Nay, you are too much swelled already!

DUCHESS

Oh, I am in an extreme cold sweat!

BOSOLA

I am very sorry.

DUCHESS

Lights to my chamber! O, good Antonio,
I fear I am undone!
Exit with her ladies.

ANTONIO

Shut up the court gates.

CASTRUCHIO

Why, sir? What's the danger?

ANTONIO

Shut up the posterns presently and call
All the officers of the court.

CASTRUCHIO

I shall instantly.

They exit.

BOSOLA

So, so, there's no question but her tetchiness and most
vulturous eating of the apricots are apparent signs of breeding.
Now!

Exits.

*After a moment Antonio enters from one side, Cariola and an old
lady from the other, carrying linens and a ewer of water.*

OLD LADY

Sir, you are the happy father of a son,
Your wife commends him to you.

ANTONIO

Blessed comfort!

For heaven's sake tend her well. I'll presently
Go set a figure for his nativity.

Scene 4

The court of the palace.

Enter Bosola with a dark lantern.

BOSOLA

Sure I did hear a woman shriek
And the sound came, if I received it right,
From the Duchess' lodgings. There's some stratagem
In the confining all our courtiers
To their several wards. I must have part of it;
My intelligence will freeze else.
It may be 'twas the melancholy bird,
Best friend of silence and of solitariness,
The owl that screamed so. Hsh! Antonio!

ANTONIO

Enters with a candle and his sword drawn.

I heard some noise. Who's there? What art thou? Speak.

BOSOLA

Antonio? Put not your face nor body
To such a forced expression of fear.
I am Bosola, your friend.

ANTONIO

Bosola?

Aside.

This mole does undermine me.—Heard you not
A noise even now?

BOSOLA

From whence?

ANTONIO

From the Duchess' lodging.

BOSOLA

Not I. Did you?

ANTONIO

I did or else I dreamed.

BOSOLA

Let's walk towards it.

ANTONIO

No; it may be 'twas

But the rising of the wind.

BOSOLA

Very likely.

Methinks 'tis very cold and yet you sweat.

You look wildly.

ANTONIO

I have been setting a figure

For the Duchess' jewels. They are stolen.

BOSOLA

And what have you discovered?

ANTONIO

What's that to you?

'Tis rather to be questioned what design,

When all men are commanded to their lodgings,

Makes you a night walker?

BOSOLA

In sooth I'll tell you.

Now all the court's asleep, I thought the devil

Had least to do here. I came to say my prayers.

ANTONIO

Aside.

I fear this fellow will undo me.

To Bosola:

You gave the Duchess apricots today.

Pray heaven they were not poisoned.

BOSOLA

Poisoned? A Spanish fig

For the imputation.

ANTONIO

Traitors are ever confident
Till they are discovered. There were jewels stolen, too.
In my belief none are to be suspected
More than yourself.

BOSOLA

You are a false steward.

ANTONIO

Saucy slave! I'll pull thee up by the roots.
You are an impudent snake indeed, sir.
Are you scarce warm and do you show your sting?
You libel well, sir!

BOSOLA

Now, sir, copy it out
And I will set my hand to it.

ANTONIO

My nose bleeds.
Takes out handkerchief and drops paper as he does so.
One that were superstitious would count
This ominous, when it merely comes by chance.
Two letters that are wrought here for my name
Are drowned in blood. Mere accident. For you, sir,
I'll take order. This door you pass not.
I do not hold it fit that you come near
The Duchess' lodgings till you have quit yourself.
Exits.

BOSOLA

Antonio here did drop a paper—
Raises lantern.
Some of your help, false friend—Oh, here it is. What's here?
A child's nativity calculated?
'The duchess was delivered of a son tween the hours twelve
and one in the night, Anno Dom. 1504'.
That's this year—
'decimo nono Decembris',
That's this night—
'Taken according to the meridian of Malfi'.

That's our Duchess. Happy discovery!

'The lord of the first house being in the ascendant signifies short life; and Mars being in a human sign joined to the tail of the Dragon, in the eighth house, doth threaten a violent death. Caetera non scrutantur'.

Why, now 'tis most apparent this precise fellow

Is the Duchess' pimp. I have it to my wish.

This is news indeed.

Our courtiers were cased up for it. It needs must follow

That I must be committed on pretence

Of poisoning her which I'll endure and laugh at.

If one could find the father now! But that

Time will discover. Let me be dismissed,

I'll bear intelligence of this to the Duke

Shall make his gall overflow his liver.

Though lust do mask in ne'er so strange disguise,

She's oft found witty but is never wise.

Scene 1

The Duke of Calabria's tent.

Ferdinand attended by a Negro page who hands him his armour on state. Offstage a soldier sings.

SONG

I wrote my love a letter
When we entered fair Milan:
Oh the war will soon be over
For the cook has lost his coppers
And the captain's lost his head
And we've shot away our lead.

FERDINAND

Methinks this war, like a long winter, hath no end

And Spring, frost-bitten, waits on victory.

To page:

My corselet.

Page begins to buckle it on.

How now, boy? How fares it with your love?

PAGE

She is well save for the stripes she hath earned from my rival.
She hath an eye like a dark lantern for its light is securely
hidden.

FERDINAND

'Tis time you rid her of this scurvy knave.

PAGE

How can I? I am so small a thing she cannot see me. 'Tis e'en
the same to her an I had not been born.

FERDINAND

And you born for her!

PAGE

She hath received no intelligence of it. Or mayhap she puts no
credence i' th' stars.

FERDINAND

A tragedy.

PAGE

If she but knew it.

Soldier enters.

SOLDIER

Entering.

A gentleman would see the Duke.

FERDINAND

His name?

SOLDIER

Bosola.

FERDINAND

Bosola here?

'Tis very strange. What should be his business? I'll see him.

To page:

Now my beaver.

Soldier exits and Bosola enters.

BOSOLA

Travel-stained and ragged.

Your Grace.

FERDINAND

How fares the Duchess?

BOSOLA

Blackbirds, they say, fatten best in hard weather. Why not I? Sir, I am worn out in your service. 'Tis two years since I left Malfi. There are rewards for horses and dogs but for a faithful servant only a sore breech from riding, these several scars, and scarce enough rags to cover my flesh.

FERDINAND

How fares the Duchess?

BOSOLA

Your Grace, I was pitifully misdirected. I have been robbed, lain in prison, took sick of the plague and like to have died only to bring you intelligence shall earn your ingratitude. I am like a raven of ill omen that endures a score of tempests, two score snowstorms, eludes the hawk and the fowler, to croak a message against which all would stop their ears. Thus I am very industrious to work my own ruin.

FERDINAND

I said: how fares the Duchess?

BOSOLA

Excellently.

She hath a son.

Ferdinand stands amazed.

BOSOLA

I said she hath a son.

FERDINAND

No!

The Duke half draws his sword. Bosola quickly hands him a paper.

BOSOLA

Read this nativity. It speaks for me.

While the Duke reads the paper the soldier sings offstage.

But when we left the city
Then a second war began
Though the first was scarcely over
And I'll drink a thousand beakers
With a whore upon my knee
Till my love again I see.

FERDINAND

Reads.

The Duchess was delivered of a son . . .

Reads on, then speaks slowly.

Mars joined to the Dragon's tail doth prophesy
Short life, a violent death.—Although ere now
I put little faith i' the stars, this forecast
I'd believe—could I believe thee, lying knave!

Suddenly.

Who is the man?

BOSOLA

I know not.

FERDINAND

Violently.

Uncase me, slave!

He begins to tear off his armour. Outside alarms and sounds of battle.

Ho, send me Delio. He shall command for me. I'll go to Malfi.

Delio enters. He is bleeding.

DELIO

Your Grace, the enemy hath surprised us. They fall upon us mightily with a great body of fresh horse. The Duchess' great standard hath been taken.

FERDINAND

No matter.

We give you our command. I am for Malfi.

You shall lead our troops.

DELIO

Alas, I can not.

He falls.

FERDINAND

What's this? Delio's hurt? We are undone!

A Soldier rushes in.

SOLDIER

Sir, you are sorely needed.

Ferdinand snatches up his armour and rushes out buckling it on. The sound of battle grows. Ferdinand turns back suddenly and speaks to Bosola.

FERDINAND

Thou villain, 'tis false! Thy paper is counterfeit.
Yet I'll come in a fortnight. Depend upon it—
I'll come shortly. Late or soon I'll come
And should this bloody war endure ten years
Or e'en a score of years I'll come thereafter
And should I fall my vengeful ghost will come
To set our house in order. Breathe no word of this.
Meanwhile do you return and this I charge you:
Find out the father!

He exits clapping his visor shut. All during the end of this scene a monotonous trumpet call has been playing outside.

BOSOLA

Why should she not bear a son? Her brother steals enough
land for five sons. Yet the Duke's eyes did start from his head
to hear it. 'Twas as if a Calabrian knight in Turkey should
hear his betrothed lies with another and he denied a furlough.
Yet all this is but policy for a gentleman like him was never
in such a sweat over less than a dukedom.

Scene 2

A room in the Duchess' palace.

Enter Antonio and Delio.

ANTONIO

Our noble cousin, my most beloved Delio,
Oh you have been a stranger long at court.
Came you along with the Lord Ferdinand?

DELIO

I did, sir. He hath been most eager
To revisit Malfi and twice made ready
To return and twice he could not. In the end
The victory was greater. But how fares
Your noble Duchess?

ANTONIO
She is well.

DELIO
I think
You hold your tongue in check. Speak freely.

ANTONIO
I do fear some great misfortune threatens.
Since you saw her she hath had three children.

DELIO
How? Is she married?

ANTONIO
No, 'tis all in secret.

DELIO
But is't known?

ANTONIO
The rumour spreads apace.

DELIO
What say the common people?

ANTONIO
The rabble
Do directly say she is a strumpet.

DELIO
And your graver heads; what is their opinion?

ANTONIO
They are politic and say nothing.

DELIO
But who, then, is the father?

ANTONIO
I cannot tell you. Tell me, Delio,
Hath not this news arrived yet to the ear
of the Lord Ferdinand?

DELIO
Meseemed his bearing
Altered the longer he tarried in the field.
He grew so quiet that he seemed to sleep
The tempest out as dormice do in winter.

I could now believe some rumour reached him
For houses that are haunted are most still.

ANTONIO

Hark, the procession comes.

The sound of cheering multitudes is heard outside. The two men go towards the window in order to look down at the street. They are obliged to speak loudly to be heard above the tumult.

DELIO

The Duke brings home the realm of Cyprus as booty and the people rejoice as if the tailors and pastrycooks were to get some of it.

ANTONIO

What are those wooden beams that stand so high?

DELIO

Prows of Turkish ships our Duke hath set upon carts for the crowd to gape at. Well he knows how the rabble love a brave show.

ANTONIO

'Tis a very forest of captured standards yonder!

DELIO

Ay, they serve well to hide the worn faces of our soldiers. Methinks their joy would have been greater had the war been shorter.

ANTONIO

Enough of this victory. I'd sooner hear the women laugh and jest as they hang upon their husbands' arms and lift their children for a father's kiss.

DELIO

Be still! Here comes the Duke.

Enter Ferdinand, Duchess and Bosola.

FERDINAND

I'll instantly to bed,

For I am weary. I am to bespeak

A husband for you.

DUCHESS

For me, sir? Pray who is't?

FERDINAND

The great Count Malatesta.

DUCHESS

Laughing.

Fie upon him!

A count? He's so old and thin
You may look quite through him. When I choose
A husband, I will marry for your honour

FERDINAND

You shall do well in't. How is't, worthy Antonio?

DUCHESS

But, sir, I am to have a private conference with you
About a scandalous report is spread
Touching mine honour.

FERDINAND

Let me be ever deaf to it.

One of Pasquil's paper bullets, court calumny,
A pestilent air which princes' palaces
Are seldom purged of. Yet, say that it were true
I pour it in your bosom, my fixed love
Would strongly excuse, extenuate, nay deny
Faults were they apparent in you. Go, be safe
In your own innocence.

DUCHESS

Oh bless'd comfort!

This deadly air is purged!

Exeunt all except Ferdinand and Bosola.

FERDINAND

Her guilt treads
Hot burning plowshares. Now, Bosola,
How thrives our intelligence?

BOSOLA

Sir, uncertainly.

'Tis rumoured she hath had three bastards now.
But by whom we may go read i' the stars.

FERDINAND

Why, some

Hold opinion all things are written there.

BOSOLA

Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them.
I do suspect there hath been some sorcery
Used on the Duchess.

FERDINAND

Sorcery? To what purpose?

BOSOLA

To make her dote on some desertless fellow
She shames to acknowledge.

FERDINAND

Can your faith give way

To think there's power in potions or in charms
To make us love whether we will or no?

BOSOLA

Most certainly.

FERDINAND

Away! Do you think that herbs or charms
Can force the will? Some trials have been made
In this foolish practice but the ingredients
Were lenitive poisons such as are of force
To make the patient mad; and straight the witch
Swears by equivocation they are in love.
This witchcraft lies in her rank blood. This night
I will force a confession from her. You told me
You had got, within these two days, a false key
Into her bed chamber.

BOSOLA

I have.

FERDINAND

As I would wish.

BOSOLA

What do you intend to do?

FERDINAND

Can you guess?

BOSOLA

No.

Ferdinand

Do not ask then.

Scene 3

The bedchamber of the Duchess.

Enter Duchess, Antonio, Cariola.

Duchess

Bring me the casket hither and the glass.
You get no lodging here tonight, my Lord.

Antonio

Indeed I must persuade one.

Duchess

Very good.

I hope in time 'twill grow into a custom
That husbands shall come with cap and knee
To purchase a night's lodging of their wives.

Antonio

I must lie here.

Duchess

Must? You are lord of misrule.

Antonio

Indeed my rule is only in the night.

Duchess

To what use will you put me?

Antonio

We'll sleep together.

Duchess

Alas, what pleasure can two lovers find in sleep?

Cariola

Good sir, I lie with her often and I know
She'll much disquiet you.

Antonio

See, you are complained of.

CARIOLA

For she's the sprawlingest bedfellow.

ANTONIO

I shall like her the better for that.

CARIOLA

Sir, shall I ask you a question?

ANTONIO

I pray thee, Cariola.

CARIOLA

Wherefore still when you lie with my lady
Do you rise so early?

ANTONIO

Labouring men

Count the clock oftenest, Cariola,
Are glad when their task's ended.

DUCHESS

I'll stop your mouth.

Kisses him.

ANTONIO

Nay that's but one, Venus had two soft doves
To draw her chariot. I must have another.

Kisses her again.

When wilt thou marry, Cariola?

CARIOLA

Never, my lord.

ANTONIO

Oh fie this single life? Forgo it.
We read how Daphne, for her peevish slight,
Became a fruitless bay tree; Syrinx turned
To the pale empty reed; Anaxarete
Was frozen into marble; whereas, those
Which married, or proved kind unto their friends
Were, by a gracious influence, transhaped
Into the olive, pomegranate, mulberry;
Became flowers, precious stones or eminent stars.

CARIOLA

Your husband is a scholar. But I pray you, tell me

If there were proposed me wisdom, riches and beauty
In three several young men which should I choose?

ANTONIO

'Tis a hard question. This was Paris' case
And he was blind in it and there was great cause
For how was it possible he could judge right,
Having three amorous goddesses in view
And they stark naked? 'Twas a motion
Were able to benight the apprehension
Of the severest councillor of Europe.

DUCHESS

If I were to choose between wisdom, riches and beauty,
I'd choose love. Even so, you shall not sleep here.

CARIOLA

'Tis well, for the silkworm is accustomed
To fast every third day and the next following
Spins the better for it.

They laugh.

DUCHESS

I pray thee tell me
When were we so merry? My hair tangles.

ANTONIO

Takes Cariola aside.

Pray thee, Cariola, let's steal forth the room
And let her talk to herself. I have diverse times
Served her the like when she hath chafed extremely.
I love to see her angry. Softly, Cariola.

They tiptoe out.

DUCHESS

Doth not the colour of my hair 'gin to change?
When I wax grey, I shall have all the court
Powder their hair with orris to be like me.
You have cause to love me, I entered you into my heart

Enter Ferdinand unseen.

Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys.

We shall one day have my brother take you napping.
 Methinks his presence, being now in court,
 Should make you keep your own bed. But you'll say
 Love mixed with fear is sweetest. I'll assure you
 You shall get no more children till my brothers
 Consent to be godfathers. Have you lost your tongue?
 Have I angered you? Forgive me, husband,
 You shall sleep here. In truth I fear nothing
 For I have tasted so much joy that now,
 Whether I am doomed to live or die,
 I can do both.

Ferdinand discloses himself and gives her a poignard.

FERDINAND

Die then, quickly.

Virtue, where art thou hid? What hideous thing
 Is it that doth eclipse thee?

DUCHESS

Pray sir, hear me.

FERDINAND

Or is it true thou art but a bare name
 And no essential thing.

DUCHESS

Sir—

FERDINAND

Do not speak.

DUCHESS

No sir.

I will plant my soul in mine ears to hear you.

FERDINAND

Oh most imperfect light of human reason
 That mak'st us so unhappy to foresee
 What we can least prevent! Pursue thy wishes
 And glory in them. There's in shame no comfort
 But to be past all bounds and sense of shame.

DUCHESS

I pray sir, hear me. I am married.

FERDINAND

So!

DUCHESS

Perhaps not to your liking but for that,
Alas, your shears do come untimely now
To clip the bird's wings that's already flown.
Will you see my husband?

FERDINAND

No, only if I could change
Eyes with a basilisk.

DUCHESS

Sure, you came hither
By his confederacy?

FERDINAND

The howling of a wolf
Is music to thee, screech owl—prithee peace.
Whate'er thou art that hast enjoyed my sister,
For I am sure you hear me, for thine own sake
Let me not know thee. I came hither prepared
To work thy discovery yet am now persuaded
It would beget such violent effects
As would damn us both. I would not for ten millions
I had beheld thee. Therefore use all means
I never may have knowledge of thy name;
And for thee, vile woman,
If thou do wish thy lecher may grow old
In thy embracements, I would have thee build
Such a room for him as our hermits
To holier use inhabit. Let not the sun
Shine on him till he's dead. Let dogs and monkeys
Only converse with him and such dumb things
To whom nature denies use to sound his name.
Do not keep a parroquet to lest she learn it;
If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue
Lest it betray him.

DUCHESS

Why might not I marry?

I have not gone about, in this, to create
Any new world or custom.

FERDINAND

Thou art undone.

Thou has ta'en that massy sheet of lead
That hid thy husband's bones and folded it
About my heart.

DUCHESS

Mine bleeds for it.

FERDINAND

Thine? Heart?

What should I name it unless a hollow bullet
Filled with unquenchable wildfire.

DUCHESS

You are in this

Too strict and, were you not my princely brother,
I would say too jealous. My reputation
Is safe.

FERDINAND

Dost thou know what reputation is?
I'd tell thee—but to no avail since th' instruction
Comes now too late. And so for you I say
You have shook hands with Reputation
And made him invisible. So fare you well.
I will never see you more.

DUCHESS

Why should only I,

Of all the other princes of the world,
Be cased up like a holy relic? I have youth
And a little beauty.

FERDINAND

So have some virgins

That are witches. I will never see thee more.

Exits.

Enter Antonio with a pistol and Cariola.

DUCHESS

You saw this apparition?

ANTONIO

Yes. We are

Betrayed; how came he hither?

To Cariola.

I should turn

This to thee for that.

DUCHESS

That gallery gave him entrance.

ANTONIO

I would this terrible thing would come again
That it might see me standing in your chamber
Your loving arms about my neck.

DUCHESS

No, No! You must instantly part hence.

ANTONIO

Why so?

DUCHESS

Oh, Antonio, do you not see
This is no storm the winds shall scatter. 'Twas
No judge who stood here but an executioner
Performing sentence on himself
And by the fearful pain driv'n to greater excess.
We are powerless to defend our love.

ANTONIO

I have heard soldiers speak of a great captain
Who cried: I'm powerless to defend me, I'll attack—

DUCHESS

I say 'tis death, Antonio! Give me my clothes,
Cariola.

ANTONIO

Persisting.

There is a weapon, little used but mighty
Even against the mightiest. Let us employ it.
Let us oppose your brother and against his frenzy
Hold up the gorgon head of reason.

DUCHESS

Oh, Antonio,

Your reason is unreason to my strangely
Distracted brother.

ANTONIO

He strives 'gainst nature
Who opposes love.

DUCHESS

Such love as ours defies
Nature, duty and established law.
I cherish this, our reckless love the more,
True passion beyond question for it is
Itself unquestioning. Alas if but the Duke
Had felt its like he would be merciful.
If he had loved he would be gentle now.
You must leave me, Antonio.

ANTONIO

This is wild counsel. Let's call up the officers
Of your palace, bid them renew their oaths
Of loyalty and attend you closely to prevent
All dark designs upon your person. Having armed
Our arguments with these precautions,
We'll speak with your too hasty brother and unfold
The history of our honourable marriage.

DUCHESS

You are deceived, dear love.
She shows him the dagger.

ANTONIO

Ha, what means this?

DUCHESS

He left this with me and it seems did wish
I'd use it on myself.

ANTONIO

Give it to me.

*The Duchess does not answer but lays the poignard down and goes
on dressing.*

Methinks some strange enchantment, sprung
From ties of blood hath bewitched thee. You seem
Altered and can hear your husband's voice no more.

DUCHESS

Nay, Antonio, here is no time for pride.
It is your welfare that concerns me
And our children's safety.

ANTONIO

Where are the children now?

CARIOLA

I have conveyed them to another wing of the palace.
The little boy hath asked for his father.

Knocking within.

DUCHESS

How now? Who knocks? More earthquakes? I stand
As if a mine beneath my feet were ready
To be blown up.

CARIOLA

'Tis Bosola.

DUCHESS

Away!

Oh misery! Methinks unjust actions
Should wear these masks and curtains and not we.

She embraces Antonio.

Now leave me. I have fashioned it already.

ANTONIO

Sadly.

I would you had given me leave to defend you
As any fishmonger would strike a blow
To shield his dear ones. But do not spare me.
Great adversaries now do menace you,
Let's put an end to strife between us two.

Exit Antonio. Enter Bosola.

BOSOLA

The Duke, your brother, is ta'en up in a whirlwind;
Hath took horse an's rid post to Rome.

DUCHESS

So late?

BOSOLA

He told me, as he mounted into the saddle,
You were undone.

DUCHESS

Indeed I am very near it.

BOSOLA

What's the matter?

DUCHESS

Antonio, master of our household,
Hath dealt so falsely with me in's accounts:
My brother stood engaged with me for money
Ta'en up of certain Milanese money-lenders
And Antonio let the bonds be forfeit.

BOSOLA

Strange! This is cunning.

DUCHESS

And hereupon

My brother's bills at Naples are protested
Against. Call up our officers.

BOSOLA

I shall.

He exits. Antonio enters.

DUCHESS

The place that you must fly is to Ancona.
'Tis the diocese of my brother, the Lord
Cardinal. Surely he will be merciful
And give us shelter, and even sanctify
Our marriage for we may bribe him,
He is covetous. I'll feign a pilgrimage
To our Lady of Loretto. We shall meet there.
Hire a house and I'll send after you
My treasure and my jewels. Our weak safety
Runs upon ingenious wheels. Short syllables
Must stand for periods. I must now accuse you
Of such a feigned crime as is a noble lie
Cause it must shield our honours. I'll give out
You have dealt falsely with me in your accounts.

ANTONIO

'Tis a good stratagem. Yet I do fear
Lest you yourself may learn to scorn me
When I am gone for you'll have many teachers.
Say what you will but stop your ears with wax.

DUCHESS

Dear friend, I'll love no one that hates thee.
Lacking your sweet presence, I'll gaze upon
Your portrait oftener than my looking glass.
Hark, they are coming.

Enter Bosola and gentlemen.

ANTONIO

Will your grace hear me?

DUCHESS

I have got well by you, you have yielded me
A million of loss. I am like to inherit
The people's curses for your stewardship.
You had the trick in audit time to be sick
Till I had signed your quietus and that cured you
Without the help of a doctor. Gentlemen,
I would have this man be an example to you all
So you shall hold my favour. Pray observe him
For he has done that, alas, you would not think of
And, because I intend to be rid of him,
I mean not to publish. Use your fortune elsewhere.

ANTONIO

I am strongly armed to brook my overthrow
As commonly men bear with a hard year.
I will not blame the cause on it but do think
The necessity of my malevolent star
Procures this, not her humour. O the inconstant
And rotten ground of service! You may see
'Tis even like him that in a winter night
Takes a long slumber o'er a dying fire,
As loath to part from it, yet parts thence as cold
As when he first sat down.

DUCHESS

We do confiscate,
Towards the satisfying of your accounts,
All that you have.

ANTONIO

I am all yours and 'tis very fit
All mine should be so.

DUCHESS

So, sir, you have your pass.

ANTONIO

You may see, gentlemen, what it is to serve
A prince with body and soul.

Exit.

BOSOLA

Here's an example for extortion; what moisture is drawn out
of the sea, when foul weather comes, pours down and runs
into the sea again.

DUCHESS

I would know what are your opinions of this Antonio.

2nd OFFICER

He could not abide to see a pig's head gaping. I thought your
grace would find him a Jew.

3rd OFFICER

I would you had been his officer for your own sake.

4th OFFICER

You would have had more money.

1st OFFICER

He stopped his ears with black wool and to those that came
to him for money said he was thick of hearing.

2nd OFFICER

Some said he was a hermaphrodite for he could not abide a
woman.

4th OFFICER

And how scurvy proud he would look when the treasury was
full! Well, let him go.

1st OFFICER

Yes, and the chippings of the buttery fly after him to scour
his golden chain.

DUCHESS

Leave us, Gentlemen.

Exeunt officers. Bosola remains. At first the Duchess pays no attention to him then begins to listen as he speaks.

BOSOLA

Alas, poor gentleman!

DUCHESS

Poor! He has amply filled his coffers.

BOSOLA

Sure he was too honest.

These are rogues that in his prosperity could have wished
His dirty stirrup rivetted through their noses;
Would have prostituted their daughters to his lust,
Made their first born intelligencers; and do these lice
Drop off now?

DUCHESS

I did not know you were his friend.

BOSOLA

Let me show you what a most unvalued jewel
You have in a wanton humour thrown away.
To bless the man shall find him. He was an excellent
Courtier and most faithful; a soldier that thought it
As beastly to know his own value too little
As devilish to acknowledge it too much.
Both his virtue and his form deserved a far better fortune;
His breast was filled with all perfection,
And yet it seemed a private whispering room,
It made so little noise of it.

DUCHESS

But he was basely descended.

BOSOLA

Will you make yourself a mercenary herald
Rather to examine men's pedigrees than virtues?
You shall miss him;
For know an honest statesman to a prince
Is like a cedar planted by a spring;
The spring bathes the tree's root, the grateful tree

Rewards it with his shadow. You have not done so.
 I would sooner swim to the Bermudas on two politicians'
 Rotten bladders, tied together with an intelligencer's heart-
 string
 Than depend upon so changeable a prince's favour.
 Fare thee well, Antonio! Since the malice of the world
 Would needs down with thee, it can not be said yet
 That any ill thing happened to thee, considering thy fall
 Was accompanied with virtue.

DUCHESS

Oh you render me excellent music!

BOSOLA

Say you?

DUCHESS

This good one that you speak of is my husband.

BOSOLA

Do I not dream? Can this ambitious age
 Have so much goodness in it as to prefer
 A man merely for worth, without these shadows
 Of wealth and painted honours? Possible?

DUCHESS

I have had three children by him.

BOSOLA

Fortunate lady!

For you have made your private nuptial bed
 The humble and fair seminary of peace.
 And the neglected poets of your time
 In honour of this trophy of a man
 Raised by that curious engine your white hand
 Shall thank you in your grave for it; and make that
 More reverend than all the cabinets
 Of living princes. For Antonio,
 His fame shall likewise flow from many a pen
 When heralds shall want coats to sell to men.

DUCHESS

As I taste comfort in this friendly speech.
 So I would find concealment.

384 The Duchess of Malfi

You shall take charge of all my coin and jewels
And follow him for he retires himself to Ancona,
Whither within a few days I mean to follow thee.
Duchess exits.

BOSOLA

What rests but I reveal all to my lord?
Now for this act I am certain to be raised
And men that paint weeds to the life are praised.

Scene 4

A Room in the Cardinal's Palace.

On stage Cardinal and Ferdinand with a letter.

FERDINAND

She's loose in the hilts;
Grown a notorious strumpet.

CARDINAL

Speak lower.

FERDINAND

Lower?

Read here what's written by my intelligencer.
A servant, her own steward!

CARDINAL

Reads letter.

Can this be certain?

FERDINAND

Rhubarb, oh for rhubarb
To purge this choler! Here's the cursed day
To prompt my memory and here it shall stick
Till of her bleeding heart I make a sponge
To wipe it out.

CARDINAL

Why do you make yourself
So wild a tempest?

FERDINAND

Would I could be one

That I might toss her palace 'bout her ears,
Root up her goodly forests, blast her
And lay her general territory as waste
As she hath done her honor.

CARDINAL

Shall our blood,
The royal blood of Aragon and Castile
Be thus attainted?

FERDINAND

Apply desperate physic,
We must not now use balsamum but fire,
The smarting cupping glass for that's the means
To purge infected blood, such blood as hers.
There is a kind of pity in mine eye—
I'll give it to my handkerchief and now 'tis here.
I'll bequeath this to her bastards.

CARDINAL

What to do?

FERDINAND

Why to make soft lint for their mother's wounds
When I have hewed her to pieces.

CARDINAL

Cursed creature.

FERDINAND

Foolish men,
That ere will trust their honour in a bark
Made of so slight, weak bullrush as is woman,
Apt every minute to sink it.

CARDINAL

This ignorance, when it hath purchased honour,
It can not wield it.

FERDINAND

Methinks I see her laughing,
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat quickly,
Or my imagination will carry me
To see her in the shameful act of sin.

CARDINAL

With Antonio?

FERDINAND

As soon do it with some strong-thighed bargeman
Or one o' the woodyard that can quoit the sledge
Or toss the bar, or else some lovely squire
That carries coal up to her private lodging.

CARDINAL

You fly beyond your reason.

FERDINAND

Go to, mistress!

'Tis not your whore's milk that shall quench my wildfire,
But your whore's blood.

CARDINAL

How idly shows this rage, which carries you
As men conveyed by witches through the air
On violent whirlwinds! This intemperate noise
Fitly resembles deaf men's shrill discourse,
Who talk aloud, thinking all other men
To have their imperfection.

FERDINAND

Have you not

My palsy?

CARDINAL

Yes, I can be angry

Without this rupture.

Looks at letter.

She will visit Ancona.

FERDINAND

You shall not receive her!

CARDINAL

I will think upon it.

FERDINAND

I could kill her now,
In you or in myself, for I do think
It is some sin in us heaven doth revenge
By her.

CARDINAL

Are you stark mad?

FERDINAND

I would have their bodies
Burnt in a coal pit with the ventage stopped
That their cursed smoke might not ascend to heaven;
Or dip the sheets they lie in in pitch or sulphur,
Wrap them in it and then light them like a match;
Or else boil their bastards to a cullice
And give it to their lecherous father to renew
The sin of his back.

CARDINAL

Coldly.

I'll leave you.

FERDINAND

Nay, I have done.

I am confident that had I been damned in hell
And should have heard of this, it would have put me
Into a cold sweat. In, in! I'll go sleep.
Now that I know who leaps my sister
I'll find scorpions to string my whips
And fix her in a general eclipse.
Ferdinand exits.

CARDINAL

Calls.

Julia, come forth.

JULIA

Comes out of hiding, perhaps from behind a screen.
I will not be served thus. I will not be hidden
Like a common strumpet. I'll home to my husband.

CARDINAL

What trick didst thou invent to come to Rome
Without him?

JULIA

Why, my lord, I told him
I came to visit an old hermit here
For my devotions. But I will not stay.

CARDINAL

When thou art with thy husband
Thou hast only kisses from him and high feeding.
But what delight is that? 'Tis just like one
That hath a little fingering on the lute
But cannot tune it.

JULIA

You told me of a piteous wound in the heart
And a sick liver when you wooed me first.

CARDINAL

Come, I'll love you wisely. That's jealously
Since I am very certain you cannot make me cold.

JULIA

You have prevailed with me beyond my strongest thoughts.
I would not now find you inconstant.

CARDINAL

You fear

My constancy because you have approved
Those giddy and wild turnings in yourself.

JULIA

Shamelessly.

Had you been i' the street' under my chamber window
Even there I would have courted you.

CARDINAL

I pray thee, come kiss me. I have news for thee.

JULIA

What is it?

CARDINAL

The Spanish jennet you have begged for
You shall have.

JULIA

You told me that you lacked for money.

CARDINAL

I will have some shortly.

JULIA

How?

CARDINAL

Do not ask.

JULIA

Fingering the gold chain he wears.

This is gold.

CARDINAL

Hath it not a fine colour?

JULIA

I have a bird more beautiful.

CARDINAL

It hath

A pretty sound.

JULIA

A lute string far exceeds it.

It hath no smell like lavender or civet.

CARDINAL

Yet 'tis able to set husband against wife,
Brother against sister and turn saint into sinner.
It is a very valorous mineral,
Who hath it needs no arms to rule the world.

Scene 5

The Shrine of our Lady of Loretto in Ancona. Enter two pilgrims.

1ST PILGRIM

We are fortunate our pilgrimage brings us
Here today. The cardinal himself conducts
The service for his sister, the duchess
Who hath arrived from Malfi to pay her vow
At the shrine of Our Lady of Loretto.

2ND PILGRIM

She hath much need to pray. 'Tis whispered
Through all Ancona that she came seeking shelter
For her steward lover and her bastards.

1ST PILGRIM

Is not this a grievous sin in the eyes of the church?

2ND PILGRIM

Not if it be performed in the bedchamber
Of a palace.

1ST PILGRIM

Who would have thought
So great a lady would have matched herself
Unto so mean a person.

2ND PILGRIM

Nay, lechery
Is a great equalizer. 'Tis blind to rank.

1ST PILGRIM

The ceremony begins. *Sounds of organ music and chanting.*

2ND PILGRIM

'Tis strange so many monks in yon procession.

1ST PILGRIM

Who is that woman, clad like a penitent;
It seems she hath a man and three small children by her side.

2ND PILGRIM

'Tis the duchess, I saw her
As she drove along the streets of fair Ancona.

1ST PILGRIM

Meseems she's very pale.

2ND PILGRIM

Here comes the cardinal
From out the sacristy. What is that parchment
He carries in his hand?

VOICE OF CARDINAL

Herefore, through the authority of the Almighty God, Father
of Heaven and His Son, Our Saviour, I, Cardinal of Ancona,
denounce, proclaim and declare Margarita Gloria, Duchess of
Malfi and her paramour, Antonio Bologna, together with
their children, anathema by the avise and assistance of our
Holy Father, the Pope, and all bishops, abbots, priors and
other prelates and ministers of our Holy Church, for her
open lechery and sins of the flesh.

1ST PILGRIM

He hath excommunicated her!

VOICE OF CARDINAL

I curse her head and the hairs of her head, her eyes, her mouth, her nose, her tongue, her teeth, her neck, her shoulders, her breast, her heart, her arms, her legs, her back, her stomach, her womb and every part of her body from the top of her head to the soles of her feet.

2ND PILGRIM

There hath been no rumour

She was to be judged.

1ST PILGRIM

And to think 'twas said

She came here for sanctuary!

VOICE OF CARDINAL

I dissever and part them from the Church of God and likewise from contracts and oaths of law. I forbid all Christian men to have any company with them and all her earthly goods I seize in the name of the Holy Church. And as their candles go from our sight so may their souls go from the visage of God and their good fame from the world.

2ND PILGRIM

Then she is no longer Duchess of Malfi!

1ST PILGRIM

By what justice hath her brother
Seized her estates?

2ND PILGRIM

Sure I think by none.

1ST PILGRIM

I have not seen a goodlier ceremony than this
Though I have visited many.

2ND PILGRIM

What was it with much violence he took
From off her finger?

1ST PILGRIM

'Twas her wedding ring.

Scene 6

A road near Loretto. Enter Antonio, Duchess, children, Cariola, servants.

DUCHESS

Banished Ancona!

ANTONIO

And what is worse our love
Is named a sin and published throughout all Italy
That all may shun us and you are ravished of your goods.

DUCHESS

Is all our train shrunk to this poor remainder?

ANTONIO

These poor men which have got little in your service
Vow to take your fortune; but your wiser birds,
Now they are fledged, are gone.

DUCHESS

They have gone wisely.

ANTONIO

Right the fashion of the world.
From decayed fortunes every flatterer shrinks;
Men cease to build where the foundation sinks.

DUCHESS

I had a very strange dream last night.

ANTONIO

What was it?

DUCHESS

Methought I wore my coronet of state
And on a sudden all the diamonds
Were changed to pearls.

ANTONIO

My interpretation
Is you'll weep shortly for to me the pearls
Do signify your tears.

DUCHESS

The birds that live in the field

On the wild benefit of nature, live
 Happier than we for they may choose their mates
 And carol their sweet pleasures to the spring.
 Dear Antonio, I've brought you this misfortune
 For which I am sorry.

ANTONIO

You are not the cause of it.
 For since that hour, scarcely now remembered,
 For 'tis obscured by so much later sorrow,
 Wherein I broke reason on the wheel and sought
 To 'scape these toils through running craft alone,
 I am myself no more.

DUCHESS

If the Lord Cardinal treat us so harshly,
 My brother Ferdinand is yet more cruel.
 I do suspect some ambush.
 Therefore by all my love I do conjure you
 To take our eldest son and fly towards Milan.
 Let us not venture all this poor remainder
 In one unlucky vessel.

ANTONIO

You counsel safely.
 Best of my life, farewell. Since we must part,
 Heaven hath a hand in it, but no otherwise
 Than as some curious artist takes in sunder
 A clock or watch, when it is out of frame,
 To bring it to better order.

DUCHESS

To eldest son:

I know not which is best,
 To see you dead or part with you. Farewell, boy;
 Thou art happy that thou hast not understanding
 To know thy misery, for all our wit
 And reading brings us to a truer sense
 Of sorrow.

Pause, she draws the boy back.

No, give me back my boy.

394 The Duchess of Malfi

He is weak in the lungs. He'll take some harm.

To second son.

Go, thou, with thy father. Alas, thou art so small.

Haply wilt cry for thy mother i' the' night.

Yet thou art stronger and thou hast far to go.

In the eternal church I hope we do not part thus.

ANTONIO

Oh, be of comfort.

Man, like to lavender, is proved best being bruised.

DUCHESS

'Tis true. O heaven, thy heavy hand is in it.

I have seen my little boy oft whip his top,

And compared myself to it. Naught made me e'er

Go right but heaven's scourging stick.

ANTONIO

Do not weep.

Heaven fashioned us of nothing and we strive

To bring ourselves to nothing. Farewell Cariola,

And thee sweet armful.

To the Duchess:

If I do never see thee more,

Be a good mother to our little ones

And save them from the tiger. Fare you well.

DUCHESS

Let me look upon you once more for—

Kisses him.

Fare you well.

He goes out with second son.

My laurel is all withered.

CARIOLA

Look, madam, what a troop of armed men

Make toward us, with their visors closed.

Why do they hide their faces? They are brigands surely.

Enter Bosola, helmeted, with a guard

DUCHESS

O they are most welcome.

Worse than brigands.

I would have my ruin be sudden.

I am your adventure, am I not?

BOSOLA

You are. You must see your husband no more.

DUCHESS

Come, to what prison.

BOSOLA

To none.

DUCHESS

Whither, then?

BOSOLA

To your palace. Your brother means you safety
And pity.

DUCHESS

Pity? With such pity men preserve alive
Pheasants and quails when they are not fat enough
To be eaten.

BOSOLA

These are your children?

DUCHESS

Yes.

BOSOLA

Can they prattle?

DUCHESS

But little, and I intend, since they were born accursed,
Curses shall be their first language.

BOSOLA

Fie, madam!

Forget this base, low-born fellow.

DUCHESS

Were I a man,

I'd beat that counterfeit face into thy other.

But come, whither you please. I am armed against misery,

Bent to the sways of the oppressor's will.

There's no deep valley but near some great hill.

Scene 7

A room in the Cardinal's palace.

The Cardinal is reading a book. A monk sits near him telling his beads.

CARDINAL

I am puzzled in a question about hell.

Looks at book.

He says in hell there's one material flame

And yet it shall not burn all men alike.

Lay him by.

Closes book.

How tedious is a guilty conscience!
When I look into the fish pond in my garden,
Methinks I see a thing armed with a rake
That seems to strike at me.

Enter Ferdinand with two swords.

How now Ferdinand?

Thou lookest ghastly.

There sits in thy face some great determination.

What is it?

FERDINAND

I am come to kill thee.

Take this sword and draw.

CARDINAL

Am I to fight with thee?

Hast thou gone mad, brother? Why dost thou threaten thus?

FERDINAND

You have published our sister's shame and publicly
Dishonoured her. For this you shall die.

CARDINAL

Now you are mad indeed!

FERDINAND

Will you fight, brother?

Or shall I softly slit your throat with my poignard?
I give you the honour of arms.

CARDINAL

I am a churchman. I will not take the sword.

Holds up the book like a sword.

This holy book is my defence. Pierce it an thou darest.

Ferdinand strikes it aside with his sword.

Hold! Thou thyself didst rage against her most
Intemperately. 'Twas you did call her strumpet.

FERDINAND

I did. But not i' th' market place.

You have so wrought it that the rabble shall soil

Her charms in the tavern and in the baths

They'll reckon whether her breasts be large or small.

You shall pay for this.

CARDINAL

Shall you defend her?

Shall she go scot free?

FERDINAND

She hath injured me, not you,

And I will punish her.

CARDINAL

These are strange words indeed.

FERDINAND

Will you fight or die like a poltroon?

He throws him the sword.

CARDINAL

Leaping up and snatching sword.

Hah!—Help!—Our guard!

MONK

Ho, guards! Guards!

FERDINAND

You are deceived.

They are out of reach of your howling.

CARDINAL

'Twas not I but my holy office did constrain me.
She had sinned.

FERDINAND

Attacking.

I think your purse constrained you.
You have stolen her lands.

CARDINAL

And to have these same estates you'd kill your brother.

FERDINAND

So be it. Choose for your death a cause that you
May best conceive. In this there sits a deeper
Reason which you shall never know.

MONK

Help! Help!

He is your brother!

Ferdinand wounds him. The Cardinal drops his sword.

CARDINAL

Thou hast hurt me!

FERDINAND

Not enough!

Drives him back and stabs him.

CARDINAL

Oh justice!

I suffer now for what hath former been;
Sorrow is held the eldest child of sin.

Exit Ferdinand.

MONK

Oh what a death was this! In quest of greatness,
Like wanton boys whose pastime is their care
We follow after bubbles blown i' the air.
Alas that thou which stoodst like a huge pyramid,
Begun upon a large and ample base,
Shouldst end in a little point, a kind of nothing.

ACT THREE

Scene 1

A ruin near Milan. Enter Antonio and his son. They hold their cloaks close against them as if walking against the wind.

ANTONIO

Yonder lie the ruins of a noble abbey.
Whene'er we tread upon these ancient stones
We set our foot upon some reverend history.
Here in this open court that now lies naked
To the injuries of the stormy weather
Some men lie interred who loved the church so well
They thought it should have canopied their bones
Till doomsday. But all things have their end.
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,
Must have like death we have. Come, boy, we must make
haste.
Until we reach Milan.

BOY

Why can't we stay with mother?

ANTONIO

We are too small to live with greatness.
Our littleness is crushed between the millstones
Of their intemperate actions.

BOY

Shall we not see her more?

ECHO

Not see her more.

BOY

Oh hark to the pretty echo from the ruin!

ANTONIO

Poor boy, well I know your feet are blistered
Yet we must fly our danger. Do not stay!

ECHO

Do not stay!

BOY

If we run fast, father, think you we will die?

ECHO

Still die.

BOY

What does the echo say?

ANTONIO

It seems to tell us, boy, how bitter is the fate
Of him who is forbid to fight. Alas
Now I remember once, ahawking with my father
Upon the plains of Brittany, our falcon
Spied a hare and coursed it till the poor beast
Was wearied unto death and so, despairing
Turned upon its back and with its stony feet
Hardened by a whole life of timid flight
Beat in the falcon's breast. Yet we must fly.
*They exit. Bosola enters and looks after them. He is accompanied by
two murderers.*

BOSOLA

Where is that letter for Antonio?
One murderer gives it to him.
'Twill shortly make him run the other way.
Though they fare fast yet death is speedier than they.

Scene 2

A room in the Duchess' palace. Enter Ferdinand and Bosola.

FERDINAND

How doth our sister duchess bear herself
In her imprisonment?

BOSOLA

Nobly. I'll describe her.
She's sad as one long used to it and she seems
Rather to welcome the end of misery
Than shun it, a behaviour so noble
As gives a majesty to adversity.
You may discern the shape of loveliness

More perfect in her tears than in her smiles.
She will muse four hours together and her silence
Methinks expresses more than if she spoke.

FERDINAND

Doth she inquire for her steward-husband and her cubs?

BOSOLA

Call them her children.
For though our national law distinguishes bastards
From true legitimate issue, compassionate nature
Makes them all equal.

FERDINAND

Doth she weep for them?

BOSOLA

Aye, for she is ignorant if they be safe or no.

FERDINAND

She shall learn. Give her my gift. With it I intend
She shall be distracted from her sorrow.

BOSOLA

Is not this too cruel?

FERDINAND

No. Unseen I'll mark how deeply her lecherous sin
Is rooted in her mind. Now first, the letter.

Ferdinand hides upon the balcony. Duchess and attendants and Cariola enter.

BOSOLA

All comfort to your grace!

DUCHESS

I will have none.

Prythee why dost thou wrap thy poisoned pills
In gold and sugar?

BOSOLA

Your brother,

The Lord Ferdinand, is come to visit you
And he hath likewise bid Antonio return.
In proof that he hath sealed his peace with you
Here is a copy of his letter to your husband.
He would have you read it.

Gives letter.

DUCHESS

Reads.

'To the right worshipful Antonio Bologna:

Sir—

Why do you not come to Malfi? Your wife, the noble
Duchess misses you and I myself I must confess want
your head in a business.—'

Strange words.

BOSOLA

Strange? Antonio is an upright treasurer.

DUCHESS

I perceive my brother's meaning. He does
Not want his counsel but his head. 'Tis written here.

BOSOLA

In this you are deceived. Prythee read on.

DUCHESS

'I have discharged the Milanesian bonds and am satisfied you
were falsely accused in this matter. Thus I have made sure
of your honest service to my sister. Think no more of the
money, I would rather have your heart.'
That I believe.

BOSOLA

What do you believe?

DUCHESS

I think my brother can not sleep until
Antonio is dead. I trust he will not come.

BOSOLA

Why? Is not this offer reasonable?

DUCHESS

That is his devilish cunning. 'Tis cut
To Antonio's measure. For he believes
In reason to a mortal degree.

BOSOLA

Meseems your fear is stronger than your love.

DUCHESS

Since all my love is long since turned to fear.

BOSOLA

I think Antonio will come. His love for thee
Will fetch him. Meanwhile
For your diversion and to cure you
Of your melancholy study of what's past,
The Lord Ferdinand presents you with a rare
And precious gift.

DUCHESS

It is not gifts I'd have
My brother send me. The noblest boon within
His power to grant is friendship to my friends.

BOSOLA

Bring on the gift.

DUCHESS

To Cariola.

Methinks I hardly know my brother now
Yet once he loved me well.

The servants bring on a huge carved chest. They are preceded by a flute-player playing on his instrument.

BOSOLA

Here is the key.

CARIOLA

'Tis a costly gift.

DUCHESS

Set it in my bedchamber.

BOSOLA

There's more within.

DUCHESS

Must I open it?

BOSOLA

Aye.

She slowly goes to it, unlocks the doors and flings them open. The bodies of Antonio and her child fall out. Cariola screams. Duchess stands frozen with horror.

Your brother does present you this sad spectacle
That now you know directly they are dead
Hereafter you may wisely cease to grieve

For that which can not be recovered.

The Duchess faints. Flutist suddenly perceives what has happened and stops abruptly. Bosola raises duchess.

Remember you are a Christian.

Leave this vain sorrow.

Things being at the worst begin to mend,

The bee when he has shot his sting into your hand

May then play with your eyelid.

The Duchess faints again and is carried off by her women.

CARIOLA

Good comfortable fellow,

Persuade a wretch that's broke upon the wheel

To have all his bones new set!

She follows the Duchess.

FERDINAND

From the gallery.

She is lost! I can not save her.

BOSOLA

Why do you do this? Is it not too cruel?

She hath suffered much.

FERDINAND

Coming down.

Base varlet, there's too much pity in thy pleading!

BOSOLA

Sir, I have served you well. I have rather sought

To appear true than honest. I swear to you

She hath had eyes for no one but her husband.

Faith, end here. Furnish her with beads and prayer book

And let her save her soul.

FERDINAND -

Damn her, that body of hers,

While that my blood ran pure in it, was worth more

Than that thing thou wouldst comfort called a soul.

I see her sin sits deeper than I thought.

To this vile appetite for her own steward

She now adds shameful tears and mourns his death

And in her lecherous grief she naked stands,

The widow of a sweaty stableboy.
To cure such maladies the surgeon's knife
Must cut until it pricks the patient's life.

Scene 3

*A room in Ferdinand's castle. On stage, Delio, a physician,
Ferdinand's Negro page.*

PHYSICIAN

Is the duke of a melancholy or choleric humour?

PAGE

He oft hath had these violent fits of late.

DELIO

On the morrow of the cardinal's strange
And sudden death his gentlemen found him
All on a cold sweat and altered much in face
And language.

PAGE

Since when he hath grown worse and worse
And yet, at times, he seems himself again.

PHYSICIAN

What other symptoms
Doth his indisposition shew?

DELIO

One met the Duke 'bout midnight in a lane
Behind St. Mark's church with the leg of a man
Upon his shoulder and he howled fearfully,
Said he was a wolf, only the difference
Was a wolf's skin was hairy on the outside,
His on the inside, bade them take their swords
Rip up his and try.

PAGE

Straight you were sent for.

PHYSICIAN

'Tis a very pestilent disease, good sir.
They call it lycanthropia.

DELIO

What's that?

PHYSICIAN

In those that are possessed with it there o'erflows
Such melancholy humour they imagine
Themselves to be transformed into wolves,
Steal forth into churchyards in the dead of night
And dig dead bodies up.

DELIO

Can you cure it?

PHYSICIAN

Let me hear more. I must sound the depths
Of his distraction.

PAGE

Once I did ask him why he loved solitariness. And he replied
that eagles commonly fly alone. They are daws, crows and
starlings that flock together. And on a sudden he started most
fearfully and cried 'What follows me?' And then he flung him-
self upon the ground and said he would throttle his shadow.

PHYSICIAN

'Tis most grave.

PAGE

Straightway he sprung up violently and stared about him and
cried out, 'Rogues, knaves, bawds! Oh the world is sick.
I think only the cold tomb can cure it. Blood's the potion for
this disease. When I go to hell I mean to carry a bribe. Good
gifts make way for the worst persons'. And then he drew his
sword, howling most horribly, 'Hence, hence! There's
nothing left of you but tongue and belly, flattery and
lechery!' And all must flee before him.

PHYSICIAN

This is a sickness past all curing.

DELIO

And what of the book?

PAGE

The Lord Ferdinand did enquire concerning
A certain apothecary, a poor
Quack-salving knave whom 'tis whispered
Poisoned his mistress with a book.

DELIO

I like it not. I do fear for the Duchess.
Nature is contrary in these fits. 'Tis known
That madmen mischief those they love.
I'll to the Count Malatesta. 'Tis time
My lady was married. Oh in her widowhood
She's weaker than a bullrush and I fear
This raging wind will bend her till she breaks.

Scene 4

A room in the Duchess' palace.

On stage Duchess and Cariola.

CARIOLA

Be of good cheer, my lady! There is a great tumult in the
city. Methinks the noble Count Malatesta comes hither to pay
you court. Pray let me set this pillow beneath your head; 'twill
raise you so that you may feel the sea breeze on your face.
They say it is a restorative.

DUCHESS

If they would bind me to that lifeless trunk
And let me freeze to death!

CARIOLA

Come, you must live.

DUCHESS

This is a prison.

CARIOLA

Yes, but you shall live.
To shake this durance off.

DUCHESS

Thou art a fool.

CARIOLA

What think you of, Madam?

DUCHESS

Of nothing. Sing me somewhat. Do you remember
That song of men unburied?

CARIOLA

Starts to sing

Call for the robin red breast and the wren,
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.

DUCHESS

Nay, do not sing. Repeat the words to me.

CARIOLA

Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field mouse and the mole
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm.
And, when gay tombs are robbed, sustain no harm;
But keep the wolf far thence that's foe to men
For with his nails he'll dig them up again.

DUCHESS

Let holy church receive him duly
Since he paid the church tithes truly.

Pause.

Dost thou think we shall know one another
In the other world?

CARIOLA

Yes, out of question.

DUCHESS

O that it were possible we might
But hold some two days conference with the dead!
From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure
I never shall know here. I'll tell thee a miracle:
I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow.
I am full of daggers and yet I am not mad.

I am acquainted with sad misery
As the tanned galley slave is with his oar;
Necessity makes me suffer constantly
And custom makes it easy. Who do I look like now?

CARIOLA

Like to your picture in the gallery,
A deal of life in show but none in practice.

DUCHESS

In my last will I have not much to give
As many hungry guests have fed upon me,
Thine will be a poor reversion, Cariola.
What noise is that?

Four waiting women enter and begin to attire the Duchess in her robes of state. Meanwhile a priest enters and reads a Latin proclamation lifting the excommunication and restoring her estates. Bosola enters with a book.

What means this? Pray Heaven

It is the end.

WOMAN

'Tis by order of the Duke, your brother.

BOSOLA

As bells begin to peal.

At the instigation of the Duke, your brother,
The Pope hath revoked your excommunication
And restored you your estates.

CARIOLA

You are Duchess
Of Malfi once more! See, 'tis the end of all
Your sorrow.

DUCHESS

What says the Cardinal?

BOSOLA

Corpses do not speak.

DUCHESS

Aye, but what says the Cardinal?

BOSOLA

His Holiness, the Lord Cardinal, Prince
Of Ancona, is dead.

DUCHESS

Dead? What did you say?

BOSOLA

Lord Ferdinand would not forgive his publishing
Of your misfortunes.

DUCHESS

My brother? Slain by my brother?

BOSOLA

Executed.

DUCHESS

And I? He'll slay me, too.

BOSOLA

Who speaks of that? Surely your brother
Would have you live, my lady.

DUCHESS

Then say to him:

I long to bleed;

It is some mercy when men kill with speed.

BOSOLA

Come, be of comfort. The Duke hath done this
On your account and you must live.

DUCHESS

That is the greatest torture souls feel
In hell; that they must live and can not die.
Come, wish me long life and I would thou wert hanged
For the horrible curse that thou hast given me.
I do feel that I shall shortly grow
One of the miracles of pity yet a thing
So wretched as can not pity itself.
Why do I waste these words upon you?
I account this world a tedious theatre
For I do play a part in't against my will.
Bosola, is my brother mad?

BOSOLA

Only in what concerns you. He thinks of naught
Save your welfare and desires of you but one thing,
That you shall swear upon this prayer book
Never to marry again. Here is the book
And you must kiss it.

DUCHESS

Methinks I do begin
To know somewhat I never knew before.
O my poor brother! Give me the book!
If that will cure him of his fearful rage,
I'll swear it gladly
Takes book.

I swear I'll never marry.
May this put his mind at rest.
Kisses book.

BOSOLA

By this he doth make sure you shall not break your oath.
He'll visit you anon.
Exits with waiting women.

CARIOLA

Beloved lady you should rest.

DUCHESS

How?
My mind is full of shadows. There are fearful
Questions, half forgot and never answered
Which do concern my brother, Ferdinand.

CARIOLA

My lady, you are pale. Think not upon your brother.
'Tis clear he hates you.

DUCHESS

I think you are deceived. I would you were not.
Cariola, there are sins with deeper roots
Than hate and there are wishes that shall be nameless—
You do not understand, for this I envy thee.

CARIOLA

Nay, my lady, such thoughts are bred of sickness. When you are sound again they'll fly out of the window.

DUCHESS

I grow sicker, Cariola. I think I must die shortly.

CARIOLA

'Tis a denial of God to speak so.

DUCHESS

My legs grow numb. 'Tis not pain I feel yet my foot seems to be sleeping.

CARIOLA

How strange you look! Surely somewhat you have eaten sits ill upon your stomach. I will chafe your legs.

Suddenly.

The book you kissed! 'Twas the book! Villains, poisoners, murderers! Help! My lady is stricken. Cry out for help!

DUCHESS

To whom?

Waiting women rush on.

CARIOLA

Heat water! Fetch some cordial!

The Duke hath done this! Fetch water, wine!

My lady is poisoned. Quickly, seek a doctor!

DUCHESS

There is none for me. My sickness is mortal.

I know his secret now. I do perceive the cause

Of this enforcing of my chastity,

This spying, this present in the chest,

And this distracted slaughter of his brother

Who bared my woes in public! All this fury,

This cruelty and this despair, even the poison,

To punish me 'cause I had shared my bed.

CARIOLA

Pray drink this cordial.

DUCHESS

To what end?

Nay, give it to me for I must live until

My brother comes that I may speak to him
And tell him what I know. I do feel such pity
That all is washed away, the ruin he hath wrought,
I am so weary I would rest.

CAROLA

No, my lady.

From these slumbrous poisons no one wakes again.

DUCHESS

Why then I must not sleep. Help me, Cariola.
Let's walk and never let me rest. Thy promise!

*She is helped up and begins to walk up and down supported by
Cariola. The women weep.*

Let someone watch to see when the Duke be come.
Make haste. My time is short.

Some go to the window to watch.

Do not weep so loud.

I am not deaf yet and this noise disturbs me.

To Cariola:

I pray thou givest my little boy
Some syrup for his cold and let the girl
Say her prayers ere she sleep. Put I must walk
And when I falter, do thou urge me on. Cry loudly
In my ear: do not stay.—I grow giddy.

CAROLA

Lean on me, my lady.

The Duchess staggers.

DUCHESS

Now all the coldness of this icy world
Creeps in about my heart. My brother is too slow.
For once this lingering pain is o'er.
Oh let me die for I can wait no more.

*She dies. Women wail. Ferdinand enters with his train accompanied
by Bosola.*

FERDINAND

Is she dead?

CARIOLA

Weeping.

She is what you'd have her.

FERDINAND

Cover her face. Mine eyes dazzle. She died young.

CARIOLA

I think not so. Her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.

FERDINAND

She and I were twins. She was born some minutes
After me and died some minutes sooner.
Let me see her face again.

To Bosola.

Why didst thou not pity her
Or, bold in a good cause, oppose thyself
Between her innocence and my revenge!
I bade thee, when I was distracted of my wits,
Go kill my dearest friend and thou hast done it.
For let me but examine well the cause.
What was the meanness of her match to me?
Only, I must confess, I had a hope,
Had she continued widow, to have gained
An infinite mass of treasure by her death.
This hath an evil sound yet not so evil
As another reason I'll not speak of.
We'll say the cause was my ungoverned passions,
My cruelty and spite. Only I fear
It is not true. Oh my sister!

He kneels by the body.

Return fair soul from darkness and lead mine
Out of this sensible hell. She's warm! She breathes!
Upon thy pale lips I will melt my heart!

BOSOLA

Nay, she is gone. Indeed we can not be suffered
To do good when we have a mind to it!

FERDINAND

Where is the book?

Bosola gives it to him.

Is this the spot?

He kisses it.

I am weary. Pray fetch me a chair, Bosola.

He seats himself and stares straight before him.

I have come a long way to sit here

And from this spot I'll never stir while I do live.

Scene 5

The courtyard of the Duchess' castle.

Enter Bosola.

BOSOLA

We are like dead walls or only vaulted graves

That ruined yield no echoes. Oh this gloomy world,

In what a shadow or deep pit of darkness

Doth womanish and fearful mankind live?

I stand like one hath ta'en a sweet and golden dream,

I am angry with myself now that I wake.

What would I do were this to do again?

O penitence, let me truly taste thy cup.

Hark, here comes the noble Count Malatesta

That would have wooed our Duchess and arrives

Only to number in her funeral train.

Come, I'll be out of this ague. I will not

Save myself. Now Justice do thy worst.

Enter Count Malatesta and his train, Delio and Duchess' eldest son.

My lord, a sad disaster!

MALATESTA

Why? How's this?

BOSOLA

The Duchess of Malfi lies within
Murdered by her brother, the Lord Ferdinand, dead, too,
Myself an actor in the main of all,
Much against my better nature and in the end
Neglected.

MALATESTA

Let him be bound. Good Delio,
We come too late.

DELIO

I heard so and
Was armed for't ere I came. Let us make noble use
Of this great ruin and join all our force
To establish this young and hopeful gentleman
In his mother's right.

MALATESTA

Yet I have heard
He is not wholly of noble birth.

DELIO

An idle rumour,
As ill founded as all which hath befallen
Within these ancient and too firmly mortared walls.
And, were it true, if here should spring
A new shoot from a hundred-year-old tree
Whose trunk too long hath twined upon itself
It were a hopeful portent.

MALATESTA

So let us now
Convey to burial these unhappy brethren.
From hidden causes their misfortunes grow;
We'll pity when the cause we can not know.

Notes and Variants

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Texts by Brecht

BRECHT'S VERSION OF WEBSTER'S 'DUCHESS OF MALFI'

1. Backed by his brother the Cardinal, the Duke of Aragon, prior to going to war on her behalf, forbids his widowed sister ever to remarry, and places a spy in her household.
2. Hardly has her brother left than the Duchess tells her steward that she loves him, and they go to bed.
3. The spy discovers this when she becomes pregnant, and he sends a letter to the Duke.
4. The Duke gets the letter just before a battle. Confused by the idea of having to hurry back, he fights badly and is taken prisoner. (Evasion.)
5. After spending some years in captivity the Duke returns and finds that his sister has remarried. He bombards her with threats. The Duchess turns down the steward's offer to fight for her, seeing this as an interference in her dispute with her princely brother; she decides to take refuge with her brother the Cardinal. (Evasion.) None the less she is moved to confide her plan to the spy by his praise for her beloved.
6. The Duke denounces his sister to the Cardinal as a whore. The Cardinal decides to excommunicate her and confiscate her duchy. He recommends a cooler approach to his brother, whose passion astounds him.
7. Having fled the Cardinal, the Duchess and her family are excommunicated by him and banished.
8. Fleeing once more, and free as a bird, the Duchess comes to realize that her brother the Cardinal acted out of avarice, but fails to understand the Duke and his motives. A letter from him shows her what a deadly hatred he bears her husband, and she sends the latter ahead with one of the children. She is arrested. (The Duchess's uncertainty about the Duke is an evasion.)
9. In his flight the steward complains to his young son about

the fate of those who let themselves be persuaded not to fight. (Evasion.)

10. The Duke has the dead bodies of her husband and little son shown to the Duchess. Deeply wounded by her despair, he decides to use the surgical knife to cut deeper. (Evasion.)
11. On seeing her executioners, the Duchess realizes that her brother's pronouncement of the death sentence is a declaration of love, and expresses her sympathy with him. Over her coffin the Duke threatens the executioner for having put his sentence into effect. (The Duchess's realization, an evasion.)
12. Arriving posthaste after hearing of the Duchess's murder, the Cardinal finds the Duke close to madness. During a memorial service organized by the Duke, the Cardinal, to stop him blaming himself, reminds him that the Duchess was no better than a whore, and the Duke kills him for the insult. He in turn is killed by his lieutenant, who has provoked his hostility by a cynical remark. (Evasion.)

[BBA 500/47-49.]

HOW 'THE DUCHESS OF MALFI' OUGHT TO BE PERFORMED

The model to be followed is the Broadway musical which, thanks to certain fiercely competing groups composed of speculators, popular stars, good scene designers, bad composers, witty if second-rate songwriters, inspired costumiers, and truly modern dance directors, has become the authentic expression of all that is American. Alienation effects are extensively used by the designers and dance directors, the latter deriving theirs from folklore. The painted backdrops which constitute the main scenery reflect the influence of modern painting, including good surrealist ideas. In the dance numbers, some of them intelligently worked-out mimes, one now and again finds gestic elements of the epic theatre. The plot

is strongly outlined and provides a sturdy scaffolding for the various insertions.

Unless the groupings in *Malfi* have as much meaning as the dispositions in a musical, and the delivery of the verse arias the . . .

[From *Schriften zum Theater* 4, p. 196. The typescript ends thus at the foot of a page, so that it is not clear if Brecht left it unfinished or if the rest has been lost.]

LETTER TO PAUL CZINNER

Dear Dr. Czinner,

Herewith a few points as to essential alterations.

1. The lighting needs to be much brighter, since long passages spoken in verse are virtually unintelligible.

2. The grouping of the actors should at least be changed so as to prevent them having to deliver scarcely intelligible (and sometimes imperfectly spoken) passages with their backs to the audience.

3. It is essential to return to the adaptation provided by Auden and myself. No cuts should be made without the agreement of both of us. Nor should additional passages from Webster be introduced without our being consulted, since the adaptation consists in a series of carefully considered cuts which were thoroughly and frequently discussed with Elisabeth Bergner, who approved them.

4. Not enough thought has been given to the casting of Ferdinand, as Elisabeth herself says. What is more, the director's conception of the part is a wrong one, as you and Elisabeth both say—so wrong as effectively to obscure and distort the whole sense of the play. You must engage a different Ferdinand.

5. Almost every scene needs to be redirected so as to make the story intelligible to the audience. I suggest that for this you should engage a fresh director. The present director has ignored the adaptation and seems quite incapable of directing in such a way as to allow the audience to follow the plot. (I

understand that the London critics likewise complained of the 'obscure plot' in his direction of the original Webster version.)

Would you let me know by Monday, 30 September, what you propose to do about these points?

Yours,

Bertolt Brecht

[BBA 1175/01-02. Copy of a letter dated 'Boston, 26 September 1945'. These appear to represent the changes which Brecht felt were needed before the Boston production could move on to New York.]

ATTEMPTED BROADWAY PRODUCTION OF 'THE DUCHESS OF MALFI'

The adaptation of John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* was undertaken at the request of an émigré German actress who had had success on the English stage. The additional verses were translated by Auden, who also saw to it that the original was not unduly maltreated. The actress feared that the New York critics might be provoked by the amputation of a literary monument. However, it turned out that the critics in question were little concerned about careful restoration and largely ignorant of the work (not a single comparison being made with any passage of the original). The production was supervised by an English director and involved old-style declamation in accordance with that so-called Shakespearean tradition whose style derives from the nineteenth century and has of course nothing to do with the Elizabethan theatre. The shortcomings of this tradition could be clearly observed. The story narrated by the play was not performed; wherever it came through none the less everything possible was done to damp down its startling twists. The characters were flattened out by the pernicious practice of stressing the 'eternally human' element, while the shabby attempt to make each event a typical case purged of any operation of chance, so that the audience might blindly follow the workings of 'fate',

stripped those events of all reality. The actors clung to their purple passages, their arias, for dear life, but without being able to ground them in the action (and for that matter without knowing how to sing). The leading actress refused to let the Duchess's experiences determine her character, nor on the other hand did she stick to one kind of character throughout; thus up to a given scene it was Countess Mitzi and thereafter Mary Queen of Scots. The line taken in the adaptation was that the Duchess's brothers were using her bourgeois love affair as the rope with which to hang her (the Duchess embarks on a bourgeois marriage), but the production saw the 'master of the Duchess' household's as a comely princeling, and cut the scene where she tells her bourgeois husband not to interfere in the dispute between her and her noble brothers. The steady aggravation of the tortures to which she is subjected by Ferdinand, himself in love, lost all meaning because his helplessness was not portrayed; while in the final act the actress rejected a scene where the Duchess sees that her death sentence is also her brother's declaration of love. This sprang from a lack of intelligence and stature, and still more from a technical inability to play such episodes. This was something which she shared with the American Antonio and the English Ferdinand. Trained at the Munich Kammerspiele at the end of the First World War and subsequently at Reinhardt's and Barnowsky's theatres in Berlin, she did not command the technique of the German epic theatre. As for the rest of the cast, they lacked (and no doubt despised) that of the American musical, which may be entirely phony and provide nothing but empty entertainment in greedy obedience to the fashions of the day, but has nevertheless managed to evolve certain primitive epic methods which could at least serve to present the great Elizabethans in something halfway resembling a contemporary manner.

[From *Schriften zum Theater* 4, pp. 194-6. Not included in GW. The Broadway production opened on 15 October 1946.]

Editorial Note

I. GENERAL

The U.S. Copyright Office contains three complete adaptations of the *Duchess* by Brecht and his collaborators: Brecht-Hays (1943); Auden (1945); Brecht-Auden (1946). The Brecht Archive, Berlin, contains no fewer than five complete or near-complete texts of the adaptation, as well as more entries for subsidiary materials than for any other of Brecht's works apart from *Galileo*. Two of these texts (BBA 144 and 146) predate the 1943 copyrighted version or belong to that immediate period; a third (BBA 1167) has a notation by Elisabeth Hauptmann, 'Auden'; a fourth (1177) is a major revision of the 1943 copyrighted text and has manuscript additions and changes most of which have been incorporated in the typed text called 'Exemplar Barbara B' (BBA 1419). This last text, then, in the possession of Brecht's daughter, seems to be the one most likely to summarize Brecht's contribution; it shows many signs of his revision, mostly in deleting and adding lines and speeches, tightening scenes and shortening them. The mass of material numbered 1174, however, contains more than two acts of a freshly typed text which includes all of Brecht's changes in 1419 and which apparently was meant to depend upon 1419's unchanged portions to form a complete play. In this text (1174), the manuscript modifications are fewer, though single sheets and groups of sheets following the coherent revised section (1174/01-64) reveal subsequent modifications and/or alternate versions of material in earlier parts of 1174 or in the formerly unchanged parts of the Barbara Brecht script.

Although no certain dates can be put on these last two texts (they are demonstrably later than mid-1943 and were typed by the same New York firm which typed the 1945 and 1946 copyrighted texts), both show careful work by Brecht and represent his continued, perhaps his conclusive, work on the play. Significantly, neither relies very extensively on *The White Devil*: whether this situation indicates that both texts date from a period before (or after) such insertions were contemplated or that Brecht decided not to attempt the amalgamation cannot be judged. Certainly the inclusion of material from *The White Devil*, having been considered by the collaborators part way through their work, was eventually dropped. Possibly the Barbara Brecht script and more probably BBA 1174 date from the latter part of the period during which

Brecht worked on the play (i.e. 1945 and 1946). A reconstructed text using the coherent portions of BBA 1174 supplemented by BBA 1419 appears as an Appendix to *Bertolt Brecht: Collected Plays*, Vol. 7 (New York: Random House, 1974), pp. 330–450. Here we have chosen to print the chief adaptation preceding W. H. Auden's entry into the work—a text based on the 1943 copyrighted version but incorporating subsequent changes by Brecht and H. R. Hays. Brecht and Auden made significant revisions in their further work, and these have been cited in the notes through reference to the Random House text.

The draft plan entitled 'Brecht's version of Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*' (pp. 419–20) gives a general view of Brecht's design for the play and his attitude towards his work on it. Although this story cannot be directly linked with any of the surviving texts (for example, paragraph 5 describes Ferdinand's captivity whereas all the surviving texts account for the passage of time by delaying Bosola's arrival with news of the Duchess's activities), most of the major points of Brecht's adaptation appear in the list. Brecht apparently criticizes Webster, and perhaps himself, with the word 'evasion', specifically the muting of Ferdinand's incestuous jealousy of the Duchess. Each time the action provides an opportunity for explicit recognition or statement of this motive, the characters turn aside. The very basic decision to emphasize this motive (in the original it remains implicit and one among several possibilities) eventually led to the introduction of a prologue (partly from John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*) in the Barbara Brecht script and to many other interpolations throughout the play. Brecht also decided to give both the Cardinal and Ferdinand an economic motive (possession of the Duchess' estates), and there are increasingly frequent references to this mercenary incentive from the time of the 1943 copyrighted version forward.

A second, more structural, change comes with the very end of the play. Webster's controversial decision to place the Duchess's death in the fourth, rather than the final, act is replaced by a conclusion in which the deaths of brother and sister occur closer together and nearer the play's end. This second modification meant recasting material from the original fourth and fifth acts and also required several adjustments in earlier scenes. Webster's Act IV (all citations in roman numerals refer to J. R. Brown's 'Revels' edition of *The Duchess of Malfi*, Methuen,) consists almost entirely of a powerful scene in which Bosola half-tortures, half-comforts the Duchess before executing her. In Act V, interest

shifts to Bosola and to an extraordinary series of ironic reversals, unintentional murders, and plans gone astray. The 1943 copy-righted text and its subsequent revision given here have a crescendo of deaths: Ferdinand murders the Cardinal (2, 7); Bosola, acting for the Duke, poisons the Duchess (3, 4); Ferdinand commits suicide (3, 4).

Carrying out this second decision had two chief effects: it greatly reduced Bosola's part and led Brecht to create a new scene (2, 7) in which Ferdinand kills his brother out of an irrational rage at the excommunication which he himself had proposed and engineered. Through Brecht's drafts, this scene develops from a crudely direct murder (in BBA 1177) to a complicated statement of the Cardinal's remorse and Ferdinand's insane jealousy. The proper use of Webster's extensive psychological analysis of Bosola puzzled Brecht throughout his work. Eventually, Bosola becomes a much less fully developed character, almost purely the Duke's tool; lingering traces of Webster's treatment occasionally blur his characterization in Brecht's versions. An example will clarify Brecht's difficulties and decisions. Immediately after Webster's 'excommunication scene' (III.iv), Bosola makes two entrances, the first with an equivocal letter from Ferdinand, asking for Antonio's 'head in a business', and the second (after Antonio has escaped) as the leader of a military guard come to arrest the Duchess and her commoner-husband. Brecht appears to have liked the letter episode, and BBA 1177 shows him employing first one of the entrances and then the other, trying to simplify the scene and yet retain Ferdinand's duplicity. Ultimately, in a part of the Barbara Brecht script which shows signs of continued indecision (2, 6), Brecht retains Webster's organization, though Bosola's double entrances clearly distressed him. How to dispatch Antonio also posed a problem. In Webster's play, Bosola kills Antonio unintentionally (V.iv), having mistaken him for Ferdinand. This solution Brecht could not use, for it had been decided that the Duchess must receive (as Ferdinand's gruesome 'gift') a chest containing the bodies of her husband and child (see 3, 2; Webster's analogous scene, IV.i, uses wax-works). Moreover, a remorseful or partially penitent Bosola was not part of Brecht's conception. Many early versions (1177, for example, and the Barbara Brecht script until a manuscript cancellation by Brecht) conclude the 'echo scene' (3, 1) with Bosola's pursuit of Antonio. In the version printed here, Antonio's death is not shown, though our text implies Bosola's responsibility (see 3, 1 and 3, 2).

Having diminished Bosola's role, Brecht could write a first act much less complicated than Webster's, although the introduction of set-speech portraits of the major characters still provided problems; the various versions reveal Brecht's experiments in conveying this material. Brecht was more interested than Webster in Duke Ferdinand's foreign wars, and he uses them to explain the curiously long gap (more than two years) between Bosola's discovery of the Duchess' pregnancy and the Duke's return to Malfi. Webster actually mentions two series of battles (in I.i and III.iii), but shows neither; Brecht amalgamates these occasions and suggests a parallel between the Duke's making war for his sister and making war on her. Act two, scene 2, later rather truncated, here concludes with an elaborate discussion of war's significance and of Ferdinand's attitudes towards both it and his sister. Brecht's anger at Antonio's portrayal as a 'comely princeling' (see 'Attempted Broadway Production of *The Duchess of Malfi*', pp. 422-3) indicates another of his significant modifications: Antonio gradually recognizes that his social status, or his acceptance of it, oppresses him and restricts his actions. While Webster remained content to show the perhaps 'bourgeois' and quite private pleasures of the Duchess's marriage, Brecht found Antonio a means to convey the social consciousness of those 'too small to live with greatness' (3, 1). Thus, 'greatness' becomes less a moral and tragic quality, as it had been for Webster, and more a sense of social class and prerogative, a sense shared by the Duchess and her brothers (see 2, 3 where the Duchess forbids Antonio to fight back).

Brecht eventually excised Webster's subplot, which involves the Cardinal's mistress, Julia. On this point, too, he seems to have wavered: the 1943 copyrighted text omits her; some relevant sections in this version append a conversation between the Cardinal and Julia to Act two, scene 4; the Barbara Brecht script and BBA 1174 make no mention of her. At one crucial point Brecht did, however, salvage an episode from the subplot: Webster's Cardinal murders Julia by demanding that she confirm an oath by kissing a book whose cover has been poisoned (V.ii). Brecht employs this device as Ferdinand's weapon against the Duchess (3, 4). While Webster's Pescara (a reasonably 'good' nobleman who survives the débâcle) and Malatesta (the foolish second husband proposed for the Duchess) both eventually disappear from the adaptation, Delio is given a larger role than in Webster's play. Delio's final restoration of order and especially the

epilogue which subsequently joined the text make Brecht's conclusion rather more optimistic than Webster's.

2. NOTES ON SPECIFIC SCENES

The following notes on individual scenes have two chief purposes: to indicate significant differences between the text printed here and the reconstruction of the 'final' and most 'Brechtian' version printed in *Bertolt Brecht: Collected Plays*, Vol. 7 (New York: Random House, 1974; cited here as 'Random House ed.' followed by the appropriate page number or numbers); to offer versions of speeches and scenes never incorporated into a complete text, but which Brecht thought promising enough to develop quite fully. In this second regard, BBA 1177 is extremely suggestive. Like 1174, it opens with a coherent and carefully revised partial text, in this case based on the 1943 copyrighted text (thus post-dating July 1943) and then becomes a series of loosely related working drafts of scenes and speeches. These working papers reveal more clearly than the analogous material in 1174 just which parts of the play gave Brecht trouble and which interested him most as a field of adaptation and modification.

One further textual oddity must be mentioned. File 1178 contains a note by Ruth Berlau: 'Material not used—the remainder having been used for complete new script.' This note may indicate that an entire text (composed in unknown proportions by Brecht and Auden) has not survived or yet been identified. On the other hand, the note may refer to the 1946 copyrighted version. The adaptation seems to have moved along a parabola from Brecht's and Hays's work—revision and rewriting which follow Webster fairly closely though beginning to incorporate some *White Devil* material as well as to adjust motivations and to introduce new scenes—to a stretch of Auden's collaboration, represented by the 1945 copyrighted text, and on to a period of Brecht's continued reworking of the play. Through various production decisions, with which Brecht disagrees in his letter to Paul Czinner, the final Broadway version returned to almost pure Webster, reduced and clarified with relatively little of the work Brecht had done before Auden's participation and after he joined the project.

[Prologue]

Brecht eventually added a prologue, based on the first seventy-seven lines of John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, which empha-

sizes Ferdinand's incestuous desires through a conversation with an anonymous friar (Random House ed., pp. 337-8 and sec 431-3).

Act one, scene 1

This text, like the 1943 copyrighted version, diverges from Webster and from later versions (Random House ed., pp. 343-5) in having Bosola hired as spy *after* the two brothers have warned their sister not to remarry. Our text also sharply reduces Bosola's part as it appears in Webster and even in later revisions. Here, none of his previous history is given; he appears a mere tool of the Duke, rather than the melancholic and alienated figure of the original.

Act one, scene 2

Our version gives a very spare example of this scene when compared with the original and some later modifications by Brecht. Two important changes later occurred: the Duchess recognizes that her brothers hope to gain 'an infinite mass of treasure' should she die a widow, and Antonio admits that his 'tongue' has 'been too long used to servitude' (Random House ed., p. 352). This text uses much more material from the analogous exchange in Webster's original (I.i. 341-506). Some later drafts, including the 1946 copyrighted version, insert the dirge from *The White Devil* as an 'interlude' after this scene (Random House ed., p. 433); our text later employs this dirge ('Call for the robin redbreast and the wren') in Act three, scene 4.

Act one, scenes 3 and 4

Antonio's decisiveness and his complicity with Cariola in concealing the Duchess's pregnancy later became important elements in this episode (Random House ed., pp. 357-60). Our text also lacks some curious exchanges between Bosola and an Old Woman which emphasize the scene's ominous quality as well as Bosola's villainy (Random House ed., pp. 353-4); the Old Woman appears here only to announce the birth of the Duchess's first child.

Act two, scene 1

Our text revises almost completely the analogous scene in the 1943 copyrighted version by introducing the soldier's song and Ferdinand's conversation with his page. Brecht evidently liked this change, for it remains in subsequent versions (Random House ed.,

pp. 365-7). The German text of the soldier's song ('I wrote my love a letter') is in Brecht's *GW Gedichte*, p. 879. Our text gives only the first verse, without its refrain, and the third; the translation reads like Ander. The missing portions (our translation) read approximately:

I never got an answer
And the war went on five years
But that wasn't so surprising.
So I drank instead, supposing:
There she lies, in the embrace
Of the man who took my place.

And we burnt the town around us
When we captured fair Milan
Till its palaces were gutted
And for seven days we looted
And we raped them old and young
For we knew they'd done us wrong.

How could she go on waiting
With the nights becoming lighter and the spring wind
blowing fresh?
Now it's time I found a lover
He can't make me wait for ever—
Women have such itching flesh.

One of the odd links among the plays in this volume is the Schweyk song 'When we marched off to Jaromir', which not only appears in Brecht's Schweyk play but evidently inspired both the present song and Simone Machard's 'As I went to Saint-Nazaire'. Nor is Grusha's 'Four generals set off for Iran' in scene 3 of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* all that remote. The two further poems which follow 'Als wir vor Milano kamen' in *GW* also relate to the Duchess, though they were not meant for use in the play. Of these the second, 'Light as though never touching the floor', will be found in *Poems 1913-1956*. Later versions shorten this scene considerably by cutting Ferdinand's triumphal procession and Delio's grim comments on the war's cost (Random House ed., pp. 368-70). Brecht later decided to have Antonio admit (to Delio) his paternity (see Random House ed., pp. 434-5 for Brecht Archive material on this scene). Our text's version of the scene ends with pure Webster (III.i, 38-86).

Act two, scene 3

Comparison of this scene in our text and in the 1943 copyrighted version indicates that it is one place where *White Devil* lines eventually entered the adaptation. Cariola's speech about the silkworm comes from Webster's other tragedy and remains in later versions (Random House ed., p. 372). Our text emphasizes Antonio's desire to meet Ferdinand's threats with rational argument and the defence that the Duchess has made an 'honourable marriage'. Oddly, the Duchess claims here that 'Such love as ours defies / Nature, duty and established law'; Webster's original hardly endorses this view, or rather, hardly puts it in the Duchess's mouth. Later versions (Random House ed., p. 376) omit it while retaining Antonio's reluctant acceptance of the Duchess's decision to separate. Her belief that the Cardinal may be bribed enters the adaptation with the text here printed; this addition coheres with Brecht's changing view of the brothers' motivations (see note on Act one, scene 2).

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Act two, scene 4

The exchange between the Cardinal and his mistress, Julia, has been added by our text to the 1943 version; all subsequent versions omit this plot completely, though the Broadway production, in keeping with its generally greater fidelity to Webster's original (see Brecht's remarks in 'Attempted Broadway Production of Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*', pp. 422-3), restored it. For Webster's much more ample treatment, see II.iv. This section of the adaptation seems to have been considered most susceptible to change: another, working version (BBΛ 1174/124-30) replaces the excommunication scene (2, 5) with a scene based on the trial of Vittoria Corombona in *The White Devil*. The following speech (from 1174/131) seems intended to replace Ferdinand's last speech of 2, 4 as preparation for the trial:

CARDINAL

Come, put yourself in tune. It seems she cannot be saved. It's a scandal that will shake all Italy. It's up to us, her brothers, to look after her dukedom. We must not hide anything, but proceed openly and fairly. I'll instantly solicit a clerical court and I'll invite all the lieger ambassadors. She is unworthy: her dukedom must be taken away from her and put in the custody of the Holy Church. Brother, let's in to make our preparations.

Act two, scene 5

BBA 1174/124-30 gives an alternate version of this scene, based upon the trial scene in Webster's *The White Devil*. This alternate version follows; use of this scene would require substituting the speech quoted above in the note to 2, 4.

Enter French and English ambassadors.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

They have dealt discreetly to obtain the presence
Of all the grave lieger ambassadors to hear the Duchess' trial
Trusting our approbation to the proof
Of her black lust shall make her infamous
To all her neighbouring kingdoms.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

But I would ask what power have the state
Of Ancona to determine a free prince.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

This is a free state, sir, and her brother, the Cardinal
Forehearing of her looseness, took occasion
Of their pilgrimage hither to arrest them all,
Duchess and steward and the indeterminate fruit
Of their mismatching, and is in haste
To bring them straight to judgment.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

But by what justice?

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

Sure, I think, by none.
These factions among great families are like
Foxes, when their hands are divided
They carry fire in their tails and all the country
About them goes to wrack for them.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

Still, she has offended. Who would've thought
So great a lady would [have] matched herself
Unto so mean a person.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

They that are
Great women of pleasure are oft sudden in their wills
And what they dream they do.

Enter officer.

OFFICER

Pray, silence in the court, their lordships do convene.

Enter Ferdinand, Cardinal, guards leading the Duchess, Antonio, and children into the dock.

OFFICER

To Antonio: Sirrah, stand off and take your proper station. This court is not the Duchess' bedchamber. But the home of justice where you may not stand beside your betters.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

Certain people should travel as Dutch women go to church, bear their stools with them.

OFFICER

The court's in session, signior.

CARDINAL

Stand to the table, gentlewoman, now signior, fall to your plea.

LAWYER

Domine judex, converte oculos in hanc pestem, mulierum corruptissimam.

DUCHESS

What's he?

FERDINAND

A lawyer that pleads against you.

DUCHESS

Pray, my lord, let him speak his usual tongue. I'll make no answer else.

FERDINAND

Why, you understand Latin.

DUCHESS

I do, sir, but mongst the auditory
Which come to hear my cause, the half or more
May be ignorant in 't.

CARDINAL

Go on, sir.

DUCHESS

By your favour
I will not have my accusation clouded
In a strange tongue: all this assembly
Shall hear what you can charge me with.

FERDINAND

Pray, change your language.

CARDINAL

Oh, for God's sake, gentlewoman, your credit
Shall be more famous by it.

LAWYER

Well, then, have at you.
Most literate judges, please your lordships
So to connive your judgments to the view
Of this debauched and diversivolt woman;
Who such a black concatenation
Of mischief has affected, that to extirp
The memory of it, must be the consummation
Of her, and her projections—

DUCHESS

What's all this?

LAWYER

Hold your peace!
Exorbitant sins must have exulceration.

CARDINAL

I shall be plainer with you, and paint out
Your follies in more natural red and white
Than that upon your cheek.

DUCHESS

Oh, you mistake!
You raise a blood as noble in this cheek
As ever was your mother's.

CARDINAL

Observe this creature here, my honour'd lords . . .

DUCHESS

My honourable lord
It doth not suit a reverend cardinal
To play the lawyer thus. If you be my accuser,
Pray, cease to be my judge! Come from your bench!

CARDINAL

You see, my lords, what goodly fruit she seems.
Yet like those apples travellers report
'To grow where Sodom and Gomorrah stood
I will but touch her, and you straight shall see
She'll fall to soot and ashes.

DUCHESS

O poor charity!
Thou art seldom found in scarlet.

CARDINAL

I pray thee, mistress, are you to deny that you did use our most
unfortunate absence to lead a vicious and lascivious life?

DUCHESS

You are deceived: 'twas marriage. 'Twas a contract
In a chamber per verba presenti.

CARDINAL

I am resolv'd
Were there a second paradise to lose
This devil would betray it.

DUCHESS

Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils.
I'm past such needless palsy. For your accusations
Of 'vicious' and 'lascivious': they proceed from you
As if a man should spit against the wind:
The filth returns in 's face.

CARDINAL

Does it? Pray you, mistress, satisfy me one question: While we
were absent did nothing leak into the open, blemishing the
noble house of Malfi?

To Antonio.

Who made you overseer?

ANTONIO

Why, my honesty; my honesty, I think.

CARDINAL

Your lust. And while you were the master of her household,
didn't you deal falsely with her in your accounts?

Antonio remains silent. Cardinal turns to Duchess.

Stood not your brother Ferdinand engaged with you for money
ta'en up of certain Neapolitan Jews? And did he not let the
bonds be forfeit?

DUCHESS

He did not.

CARDINAL

And whereupon, as you didn't testify yourself, our brother's
bills at Naples were protested?

DUCHESS

They were not.

CARDINAL

But didst say so before your officers.

DUCHESS

To save my husband's life.
Condemn you me for that I do love him?

CARDINAL

And look upon this creature was her husband.

DUCHESS

Had he been in the street
Under my chamber-window, even there
I should have courted him.

CARDINAL

Hear you, my lords, how she calls lechery love, a life in sin she
calls a solemn marriage. This whore, foresooth, is holy.

DUCHESS

Ha! Whore! What's that?

*Murmurs in the court. Ferdinand rises and comes down slowly to
confront the Duchess. Sudden silence.*

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

There is that in his look
Would wither all that's green, deform all music
Into a witch's whisper.

FERDINAND

What's that? What's that?
Shall I expound whore to you? sure I shall;
I'll give their perfect character. They are first
Sweetmeats that rot the eater, in man's nostrils
Poison'd perfumes. They are cozening alchemy;
Shipwrecks in calmest weather. What are whores?
Cold Russian winters, that appear so barren
As if that nature had forgot the spring.
They are the true material fire of hell.
What are whores?
They are those flattering bells have all one tune
At weddings, and at funerals. They are worse,
Worse than dead bodies which are begg'd at gallows
And wrought upon by surgeons to teach man
Wherein he is imperfect. What's a whore?
She's like the gilt counterfeited coin
Which, whosoever first stamps it, brings in trouble
All that receive it.

DUCHESS

This character 'scapes me.

FERDINAND

But you shall not escape
What you have made yourself. There is no court
Can punish what you are. Had I a sister?

I have a limb corrupted to an ulcer.
And I will cut it off.
Exit Ferdinand.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

Some horrid thing
Glared through his human windows as he spoke.
I wish I had not seen it.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

'Tis said he loved her
Dearer than life. The question of her shame
Wrecks his proud soul. There are your true pangs of death,
The pangs of life that struggle with great spirits.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

Hush! The Duchess is about to speak.

DUCHESS

I have no writ to rend
Such incantations save they mean
Like you, grave reasoners, to undo me,
Whose hates are plain. Brother, you had a hope
Had I continued widow to have gained
An infinite mass of treasure by my death.

CARDINAL

See, my lords,
She scandals our proceedings.

DUCHESS

I have houses,
Jewels, and a poor remnant of crusadoes.
Would these make you charitable?

CARDINAL

Hark, with what insolence she offers bribes
To hush the voice of justice. Get this down
In evidence against her plea of innocence.

DUCHESS

Humbly thus,
Thus low, to the most worthy and respected
Lieger ambassadors, my modesty
And womanhood I tender, but withal
So entangled in a curs'd accusation
That my defence must personate masculine virtue.

CARDINAL

This is the tedious prolixity of guilt.
Have done.

DUCHESS

Find me but guilty, sever head from body
 We'll part good friends: I scorn to hold my life
 At yours or any man's entreaty, sir.

CARDINAL

Speak no more for our opinions are concluded
 Hear then, Giovanna, your public fault
 Join'd to th' condition of the present time
 Takes from you all the fruits of noble pity
 Such a corrupted trial have you made
 Both of your life and beauty, and been styl'd
 No less an ominous fate than blazing stars
 To princes. Attend your sentence.

The Cardinal and the clerical judges rise, so do the rest at a hint of the Cardinal. The Duchess, Antonio and the children are placed before him.

CARDINAL

Herefore, through the authority of the Almighty God, Father of Heaven and His Son, Our Saviour, I, Cardinal of Ancona, denounce, proclaim and declare Giovanna Teresa, Duchess of Malfi, and her paramour, Antonio Bologna, together with their children, anathema by the advice and assistance of our Holy Father, the pope, and all the bishops, abbots, priests, and other prelates and ministers of our Holy Church, for her open lechery and sins of the flesh.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR

He hath excommunicated her!

CARDINAL

I curse her head and the hairs of her head, her eyes, her mouth, her nose, her tongue, her teeth, her neck, her shoulders, her breast, her heart, her arms, her legs, her back, her stomach, her womb, and every part of her body from the top of her head to the soles of her feet.

DUCHESS

A rape! A rape! Yes, you have ravished justice .
 Forc'd her to do your pleasure.

CARDINAL

I dissever and part thee from the church of God and likewise from contracts and oaths of law. I forbid all Christian men to have any company with thee and all her earthly goods I seize in the name of the Holy Church. And as their candles go from our sight so may their souls go from the visage of God and their good fame from the world.

Away with her!
Cardinal steps down from the bench.
To an official:
 Take her right hand and raise it!
Cardinal takes something off the Duchess' finger.
Exeunt Cardinal and the clerical judges.

ENGLISH AMBASSADOR

What was it with such violence he took
 Off from her finger?

SPANISH AMBASSADOR

'Twas her wedding ring.

Act two, scene 6

As described on p. 426 above, this scene underwent several changes in the course of the adaptation; the most striking variant is the number of times Bosola enters. In Webster (III.iv) and in later versions (Random House ed., pp. 388–9), Bosola appears first with an equivocal letter inviting Antonio to return to Malfi and then later, disguised, comes to arrest the Duchess. Our text omits the first entrance and moves much of Webster's material to Act three, scene 2.

Act two, scene 7

This scene, largely original with the adaptors, went through many versions; a later one (Random House ed., pp. 393–6) develops the Cardinal's mercenary goals even further and provides more evidence of Ferdinand's incestuous jealousy.

Act three, scene 1

Webster's version of this scene takes place between Antonio and Delio; many different arrangements of the scene appear in archival texts and others. Our text adds to the 1943 version Antonio's evocative lines on 'the plains of Brittany' and retains Bosola's un-Websterian entrance (later cut, see Random House ed., pp. 396–7 and 444–6). BBA 1174/107 has another version of the scene's conclusion with the note, 'Brecht's rough translation' opposite Antonio's last speech:

ANTONIO

O fearful echo that accuses my life
 Of its long weakness; that has not made its path
 By definite steps but sought its shelter

In the strong wills of others. Now
I am caught between their fighting stars, a clerk
Unpractised in the sword.

SON

Why can't we go with mother?

ANTONIO

We are too small to live with greatness, son.

SON

Shall we not see her more?

ECHO

Not see her more.

SON

Why does the echo say so, father?

ANTONIO

It tells us, son, how bitter is the fate
Of him who is not allowed to fight. The whole day
(Which now will be ended soon) I have been thinking
Of another day, when I went ahawking with my father
Upon the plains of Brittany, and saw our falcon spying a hare
And coursing it till the poor beast
—Since flying is much easier than running—
Was wearied unto death and, despairing utterly,
Turned upon its back and with its stony feet
Hardened by a whole life of timid flight
Hammered to pieces our falcon's chest. Lucky hare!
O 'tis impossible to fly your fate.

ECHO

O, fly your fate.

Act three, scene 2

This scene concludes the action implied by Bosola's appearance at the close of the preceding scene; in Webster's original, Antonio survives to participate in the final series of murders and counter-murders, and Ferdinand sends the Duchess wax-work imitations of their bodies. BBA 1174 has variants of the concluding exchange between Bosola and Ferdinand, showing the way in which Brecht reduced Bosola's express motives and justifications for his actions. Three versions will illustrate Brecht's working methods:

FERDINAND

Damn her! that body of hers,
While that my blood ran pure in't, was more worth

Than that which thou wouldst comfort, called a soul.
Curse upon her!
I will no longer study in the book
Of another's heart

BOSOLA

Must I see her again?

FERDINAND

Your work is not yet ended.
To cure such maladies the surgeon's knife
Must cut until it pricks the patient's life.
Exeunt.

(1174/75)

BOSOLA

Right. Give me that scholarship
You promised me and I'll be off to Bologna
And never see her again.

FERDINAND

Your work is not yet ended.
I found her sin sits deeper than I thought.
Vile appetite has turned to lecherous grief.
Such mourning is unbearable.
To cure such maladies the surgeon's knife
Must cut until it pricks the patient's life.
Exeunt.

(1174/80)

BOSOLA

Right. Give me my scholarship and I'll go
To complete my education, never see her again.

FERDINAND

Your work is not yet ended.
I found her sin sits deeper than I thought.
Vile appetite has turned to lecherous grief
With pallidness hardly hidden, impudent [*sic*] tears.
Such mourning is imbearable [*sic*]. Naked [*sic*] she stands
The widow of a sweaty stableboy.
To cure such maladies the surgeon's knife
Must cut until it pricks the patient's life.

(1174/79)

Between this scene and the next one, the 1946 text copyrighted by Auden and Brecht inserts an 'interlude' by Bosola. The text comes from Webster's play (IV.ii.178-95) and is spoken by Bosola in an attempt to bring the Duchess 'By degrees to mortification.' It is cited here from 1174/85:

INTERLUDE

BOSOLA

Hark, now everything is still
 The screech-owl and the whistler shrill
 Call upon our dame aloud,
 And bid her quickly don her shroud!
 Much you had of land and rent;
 Your length in clay's now competent:
 A long war disturbed your mind;
 Here your perfect peace is signed:
 Of what is't fools make such vain keeping?
 Sin their conception, their birth weeping,
 Their life a general mist of error,
 Their death a hideous storm of terror.
 Strew your hair with powders sweet,
 Don clean linen, bathe your feet,
 And (the foul fiend more to check)
 A crucifix let bless your neck.
 'Tis now full tide 'tween night and day;
 End your groan, and come away.

This text also appears on 1174/109 and 123.

Act three, scene 3

Our text is the first to introduce this scene and Ferdinand's 'lycanthropy'; the 1943 text has nothing like it, though Webster (V.ii) provides most of the lines.

Act three, scene 4

As Hays's comment on the collaboration suggests, the conclusion of the play provided difficulties, partly because of the original's complexity, partly because of certain production requirements made by Elisabeth Bergner and Paul Czinner. In Webster's play and in later versions of the adaptation, Bosola executes Cariola and the Duchess' surviving children (Random House ed., pp. 411-12), while no mention of such an action occurs here. The manner of Ferdinand's death also undergoes some change. Here, he dies poisoned by the book which killed the Duchess, presumably a comment on his love for her; in a later version (Random House ed., pp. 413-14), Bosola stabs his employer after demanding some recompense 'due . . . [his] service.'

Act three, scene 5

Malatesta, a character from Webster's original, disappears as a speaking part in subsequent versions of the adaptation, and the concluding conversation takes place between Delio and an anonymous Captain (Random House ed., pp. 414-16).

[*Epilogue*]

Later texts add an epilogue, partly based on lines from Webster's *The Devil's Law-Case* (Random House ed., pp. 416-17).

